

Press Release
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HKNE hosts online talk “How can the Older and Younger Generations Distinguish True and False Information about the Epidemic?”

The COVID-19 epidemic has changed the way people live. Children miss their school life. The high-risk elderly are staying at home or in institutions to live a quiet but lonely life. Both the younger and the older generations are confused by a deluge of conflicting information about the epidemic.

The Hong Kong News-Expo (HKNE) today (17 April) held an online talk “How can the Older and Younger Generations Distinguish True and False Information about the Epidemic” and invited experts to share their advice on how to glean the correct information that can help the young and the old to positively confront the difficulties during this difficult time.

The online talk was joined by Dr. Lam Ching-choi, Chairman of the Elderly Commission and Member of the Executive Council, Ms. Sylvia Chan May-kuen, Principal of Ying Wa Primary School and Member of Committee on Professional Development of Teachers and Principals, and Ms. May Chan Suk-mei, Vice-Chairperson of HKNE.

Dr. Lam pointed out that during the epidemic, visits to the elderly at institutions by their families became impossible and this had seriously affected their daily life. He said the young should show empathy with the needs of the old and help them adapt to the new environment with the use of new technology while at the same time caution them the importance of verifying information readily available on the internet.

Dr. Lam said residents should trust advice given by medical experts because Hong Kong medical professionals enjoy good reputation in the world. He urged people to get two doses of vaccine as quickly as possible so that they can soon visit their elderly family members in institutions.

As innovative technology can help look after the elderly in a better way, he said the authorities should plan for such facilities and formulate policies for the benefit of intergenerational integration.

Ms. Sylvia Chan May-kuen said the emotions of parents and students are inevitably affected by the length of time that children have to take online classes at home. A return to normal schooling can enable students to have a whole-person development and to learn how to communicate and get along with others, she said.

She believed if schools assist teaching staff to undergo regular COVID-19 testing, face-to-face classes can resume at an early date. Principal Chan agreed that vaccination is an important step to return life to normal.

She suggested that teachers, parents and students should learn how to distinguish the accurate and useful information from the excessive quantity of information available through fact-checking and induction. She said it is vital to select information suitable to one's needs and to avoid spreading unconfirmed claims.

HKNE has taken efforts to alert the public to certain information circulating online. It has hosted a series of online themed talks on the epidemic since December 2020. Ms. May Chan Suk-mei, Vice-Chairperson of HKNE, said during this pandemic, the community should be equipped with the quality of a media and information literate and be able to tell what is true and what is false.

The key to obtain accurate information is to listen to the professional advice of experts and academics, Ms. Chan said.

Photo Captions:

Photo 1: Dr. Lam shares his views on the changes that have happened to the elderly during the epidemic.

Photo 2: Principal Chan agrees that vaccination is an important step for returning life to normal.

Photo 3: Ms. May Chan Suk-mei points out the importance of the community acquiring the skills of media information literacy.

Photo 4: (From left) Dr. Lam Ching-choi, Ms. Sylvia Chan May-kuen and Ms. May Chan Suk-mei discuss "How can the Older and Younger Generations Distinguish True and False Information about the Epidemic?".