

3. Civic Education for Civil Society

The Civic Education for Civil Society Project, as in the previous years, is mainly a project aiming at reinforcing civil education in line with our concern on human rights issues, social justice, and the development of civil society. Last year we provided different activities for students and teachers. Issues that we have tackled include Hong Kong/mainland China and international politics, democracy, technological development, youth problems and policy, etc.

Through experiential learning, teaching kits and workshops, we have been supporting teachers on curriculum design and raising the social awareness of students.

3.1 Teaching Kits

- ***Violence and Peace***

This set of teaching kits discusses issues including spouse violence, school violence, blood diamonds and human rights, logging and environmental damage, terrorism and green movement. It is designed to help students to reflect on and understand the issues of violence from global, socio-cultural, economic and political perspectives, rather than merely taking them as problems of individuals.



- **Internet and Information Development**

With a critical interrogation on topics related to people's socio-political participation, problems of copyrights and the digital divide, this set of teaching kits enables students to know more about the relationship between their own living, internet development and the flood of information. How can citizens (particularly the youth) participate in social and political affairs through internet? What is the relationship

between the internet and copyrights? How does the policy of “all rights reserved” limit citizens’ rights to use and disseminate their own works? All the above questions will be discussed in the teaching kits. Finally, we hope that youth can become more aware of the importance of information sharing in view of the need to encourage creativity and the problem of poverty, particularly for marginalized groups. Moreover, factors that cause the digital divide between cities and rural areas in China and between China and other countries will also be discussed.

- **Yx Newsletter**

The Yx Newsletter aims at providing materials and critical perspectives for school teachers and students on contemporary issues related to the communities, nations and the globe. Last year the Yx Newsletter covered local issues such as the bar benders strikes, elections, the Tibet question, the Burmese democratic movement, bio-fuel, and food crisis, etc.

3.2 Workshops

- **Partnership between the Youth and Marginalized Groups**

With the help of “A Generation”, a theatrical troupe, we conducted a drama workshop on the situation of the ex-mentally ill persons in a secondary school. There are 13 students in the group, mainly from F. 5 and F. 6. This workshop included a series of activities which aimed at helping students to know more about the mental health problems in Hong Kong and understand the situation of ex-mentally ill persons sympathetically, touching on issues such as the rehabilitation process, discrimination experienced by persons with mental illness, fault policy of the government and the medical system, etc.

- **Law-related Education**

Last year, we were invited by the Center for Citizenship Education (Hong Kong Institute of Education) to join their Law-related Education Project (support by the Teaching Development Fund). This project aimed at enhancing secondary school teachers’ understanding of the relationship between law and human rights, discrimination bills and relevant cases.

Through several meetings and workshops on how to design teaching plans and methods of evaluation, we helped teachers to integrate law and human rights issues into their teaching.

- **Other Workshops**

Different workshops had also been conducted in various schools and centers on issues ranging from gender, sexuality, media, patriotism, poverty, situation of racial minorities and aged people. Six teachers' workshops were organized with respect to issues of human rights and discrimination bills. Besides, we also held workshops on how to teach on issues of contemporary China, sex education and sexual violence in school.

3.3 “Poverty and Social Exclusion” Experiential Camp

In order to enable us to rethink the problem of poverty from the framework of social structure, the theme of this year's experiential camp was on the relationship between social exclusion and poverty: How have the current social system and cultural prejudices limited the rights of communities in poverty in respect of socio-political participation so that their poverty situation is difficult to ease due to lack of social resources?



“Poverty and Social Exclusion”: An experiential camp 2008/2/15-17

In the camp, students are expected to understand that poverty should not be confined only on material level; poverty can also be regarded as lack of social capital or understood in terms of spirituality. New immigrants, sexual minorities, grassroots workers and racial minorities were invited to share their experiences in the camp. Students raised questions and voiced concerns not only on the lack of social resources for the underprivileged groups, but also on the deprivation of their rights, dignity and equality.

3.4 International Human Rights Day Carnival 2007

There were some 20 local organizations holding the carnival. The theme of this year's carnival was "Say No to Human Rights Violation". Our booth focused on the racial minorities and the forthcoming Race Discrimination Ordinance in Hong Kong.

Chan Yuk-fan



International Human Rights Day Carnival
2007/12/9