

Findings of Territory-wide Physical Fitness Survey for the Community announced (with photos/video)

The Community Sports Committee (CSC) announced the survey findings of the Territory-wide Physical Fitness Survey for the Community today (June 16). The overall findings of the survey revealed that although most of the physical fitness parameters have improved across different age groups compared to the findings of a similar survey a decade ago, reflecting the growing health awareness of the public. The findings also indicated, however, that more than half of the public did not meet the daily physical activity level as recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO).

The survey was steered by the Territory-wide Physical Fitness Survey for the Community Advisory Committee (AC) set up by the CSC under the Sports Commission, and was co-ordinated by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) with the Department of Sports Science and Physical Education of the Chinese University of Hong Kong as the survey consultant. More than 9,300 Hong Kong people participated in the survey, which divided all participants aged 7 to 79 into six categories (aged 7-11, 12-16, 17-19, 20-39, 40-59 and 60-79) and was based on the age and gender distribution reported by the 2021 Population Census of the Census and Statistics Department for data collection in proportion.

The AC is pleased to learn that the overall findings of the survey show that most physical fitness performances were generally better than those in the similar survey taken a decade ago. However, the muscular endurance of children and the muscular strength of adolescents performed worse than that recorded in the previous survey. The new survey recommended that children should receive more muscular endurance training and adolescents should do more muscular fitness exercise, such as box jumping, rope skipping and long jumps in order to enhance their physical fitness.

The balance of adults also has to be improved. It is recommended that additional balance exercises should be arranged. Noting increased subcutaneous fat among adolescents and a high level of prevalence of central obesity and hypertension in the older population, the survey suggested that stakeholders should launch exercise programmes to manage obesity and hypertension.

Meanwhile, it is discovered that more than half of Hong Kong people did not have sufficient physical activity. The survey showed that 53.8 per cent of adults did not meet the level of physical activity recommended by the WHO i.e. more than 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) in a week. And 66.3 per cent of children and 50.7 per cent of adolescents did not meet the WHO's recommended standards for physical activity, (i.e. an average of 60 minutes per day of MVPA through the week).

Among them, only 15.7 per cent of these children and 34.4 per cent of these adolescents perceived that they had insufficient physical activity. It reflected a significant discrepancy between the perception of physical activity participation and their actual physical activity behavior among children and adolescents.

In view of this, the report advised that promotion of the WHO physical activity recommendations to members of the public should be strengthened. More sports activities based on their favourite sports revealed in the survey findings should be organised, such as ball games (the favourite sport of adolescents), swimming (the second favourite sport of adolescents), and skating or roller skating (the third favourite sport of adolescents). Parental involvement was one of the important factors influencing the physical activity participation of children. It is suggested to organise more family-based exercise events over weekends and holidays, as well as encouraging parents to exercise with their children during their leisure time.

Furthermore, the major barriers for children to participate in physical activities were "bad weather", "busy with homework" and "feeling tired", while adolescents reported "muscle soreness", "lack of time", "bad weather" and "too tired" as their top barriers to exercise. Adults reported that "lack of time" was their main obstacle. To eliminate obstacles and arouse the interest of engaging in physical activity, the report suggested focusing on the quality of homework, rather than the quantity of homework. At the same time, adolescents could be educated on fundamental post-exercise recovery knowledge. The Government should also collaborate with various national sports associations to offer more online training courses which are less subject to time constraints.

The earlier Physical Fitness Tests for the Community were successfully conducted by the Government in 2005 and 2011 respectively, and this is the third survey. The survey aims to set up a database on the physical fitness of Hong Kong people, identify the relationship between physical exercise patterns and the physical fitness of Hong Kong people, and assist the Government in identifying priority areas for improvement to enhance the overall physical fitness of the community. Through the survey, participants could have a general understanding of their own fitness conditions, as well as understand the importance of physical fitness for health and exercising regularly in daily life.

The Chairman of the CSC, Professor Patrick Yung; the Vice-Convenor of the AC, Mr Wong Po-kee; Professor of the Department of Sports Science and Physical Education of the Chinese University of Hong Kong Professor Stanley Hui; the Assistant Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Leisure Services), Mr Benjamin Hung; and the Acting Senior Curriculum Development Officer (Physical Education) of the Education Bureau, Ms Yuen Lai-fong, announced the survey findings at the press conference today.

For the Executive Summary of the Territory-wide Physical Fitness Survey for the Community, please visit thematic website

at www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/healthy/physical_fitness_test_2021/index.html.

