

Police kick off third cohort of Leadership Institute on Narcotics (with photos)

The Hong Kong Police Force today (April 6) launched the third cohort of the Leadership Institute on Narcotics (L.I.O.N.), a dedicated programme to develop young anti-drug leaders.

Speaking at the kick-off ceremony, the Commissioner of Police, Mr Siu Chak-yeo, noted the resounding success achieved by L.I.O.N. since its establishment in 2021—the emergence of 200 young anti-drug leaders and the dissemination of the “Drugs? Never, Ever!” message to over 50 000 students and members of the public, paralleled by a cumulative decrease of 52.4 per cent in the number of arrestees aged under 21 for drug offences, from 624 in 2021 to 297 in 2023. Among them, those arrested for serious drug offences were reduced to 178, including 48 students. The cumulative drop in the number of cases involving students was greater than that of non-students.

Mr Siu also mentioned that the number of mentees signed up for this year's programme had reached a record high. He expressed appreciation towards L.I.O.N.'s sponsors, executive committee members, professional trainers and mentors, as well as the principals of the 20 participating secondary schools for their unwavering support—the bedrock of L.I.O.N.'s continuous development and its commitment to passing on the anti-drug torch to future young generations.

Mr Siu added that an evaluation study conducted by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University on the second cohort of L.I.O.N. showed that the programme had effectively raised anti-drug awareness among mentees and enhanced their communication skills, leadership capabilities and self-confidence. The third cohort of L.I.O.N. will include new modules on stress management, digital media publicity, creative thinking and video shooting and editing skills, to further develop the potential of the participants.

During the ceremony, mentees from the second cohort shared their valuable insights gained from an overseas exchange tour. They broadened their horizons by telling good stories of Hong Kong's anti-drug efforts and learnt about drug harms and the anti-drug policies of different countries. The kick-off ceremony also featured the premiere of a new video jointly presented by the Hong Kong Police Force and the Correctional Services Department. The video showcased the experience of a young inmate who was sentenced to imprisonment for drug manufacturing, using her own story to caution young people against making similar mistakes.

Founded by the Police Narcotics Bureau in 2021, L.I.O.N brings together different sectors of the community and it is committed to nurturing 80 secondary school students and 20 undergraduates each year to become anti-drug leaders. Through participating in drug knowledge workshops, leadership

training camps, Mainland and overseas exchange programmes, as well as anti-drug campaigns on campus, mentees learnt to spread messages against drugs within the community. Coupled with relentless and utmost enforcement efforts, the Police will continue working with the public to protect the youth from drug harms and to build a society embracing a “Drugs? Never, Ever!” culture.



