

# Recognition ceremony commends children and adolescents with outstanding achievements (with photos)

The Director of Social Welfare (DSW), Mr Edward To, attended the 2025 Aspiring Youth Recognition Ceremony today (March 15) with the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (TWGHs), Ms Mandy Tang, to celebrate the remarkable progress and achievements made by the children and young people who were made wards of the DSW as well as those receiving residential care from the TWGHs.

Addressing the event, Mr To said that the award presentation ceremony, jointly organised by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) and the TWGHs, is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. Promoting a caring spirit throughout the years, the ceremony has been giving recognitions to relevant children and youths who have achieved laudable performance in different aspects, including academics, conduct, sports, arts and services. Mr To commended the awardees for setting a good model for other children and youths in the community with their courage and perseverance in facing challenges and adversities, as well as their determination to strive for a bright future.

Mr To also extended appreciation to the caregivers for helping these children and adolescents to grow and thrive in a nurturing environment. He encouraged all participating children and adolescents to maintain a positive attitude, continue to pursue their dreams and realise a rewarding and blissful future.

Twelve-year-old Ah Son is one of the recipients of the Best Achievement Award. He is a ward of the DSW and is now receiving residential care from the TWGHs. The grief at the loss of his father, life pressures and the difficulties arising from the pandemic have once taken Ah Son down both emotionally and academically. However, with the tender care and nurturing support from his caregivers, Ah Son has overcome the challenges and successfully enrolled in his ideal secondary school. Showing resilience and a positive learning attitude, the academic results of Ah Son in Secondary One have been outstanding. Ah Son is also talented in sports. With exceptional skills, he is now a shining star at the school's badminton team.

Another awardee of the Best Achievement Award is 19-year-old Ismael. He was made a ward of the DSW before he reached one year of age due to the divorce of his parents. Ismael has been positive in the face of life challenges. Staying focused on his studies, he also shows a passion for music and does especially well in singing and guitar. Since the completion of his secondary education in 2024, Ismael has enrolled in a bachelor of social work programme. Last summer, he visited a remote area in Thailand with a church group to serve the underprivileged.

Children and adolescents are made wards of the DSW for various reasons, such as death, loss, imprisonment, long-term hospitalisation or incapability of their parents, or because they are unable or unsuitable to live with their family members. Prioritising the best interests of children and adolescents, the SWD's social workers would, depending on individual case circumstances, apply for wardship for a case in accordance with the court procedures stipulated in the Protection of Children and Juveniles Ordinance (Cap. 213 of the Laws of Hong Kong), and draw up appropriate long-term welfare plans for them, such as arranging for adoption or reunion with their families, or preparing them to live independently when they become adults.

As at the end of December 2024, there were a total of 788 children and young people who were made wards of the DSW. At the ceremony today, 44 children and youths were awarded the Best Achievement Award or the Best Progress Award.

