

Hong Kong COVID-19 Wave 5 Response



Save the Children
救助兒童會

The outbreak of the 5th wave of COVID at the beginning of 2022 changed the lives of children in Hong Kong forever. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds were among the worst affected. The disruption of their education was only one of many difficulties; reduced daily social interaction took a steep toll on their physical and emotional development. Their families suffered tremendous pressure as their health and financial stability came under threat. Many families were driven further into financial hardship, bringing greater stress to family relations.

In consultation with affected families and grassroots organisations, Save the Children's 'You Are Not Alone' COVID-19 project responded to the needs of some of Hong Kong's most families most in-need – especially those living in sub-divided flats. We provided much-needed relief items and assistance to help mitigate their skyrocketing costs of living; accelerated learning for children by giving them stimulation, focus, and hope; and strengthened family resilience through mental health support.

Save the Children worked with community partners in the low-income districts hardest hit by COVID: Sham Shui Po, Yau Tsim Mong, Wong Tai Sin, Kwun Tong, Kowloon City, Island East, Yuen Long and Tai Po.

OUR RESPONSE

1

Immediate Relief through Essential Items

Outcomes:

- Alleviate immediate burden of lost income and additional pandemic-related expenses
- Keep families safe; minimise learning disruption



- Rapid antigen test kits
- Essential medical supplies
- Personal protective equipment



- Emergency food vouchers



- Home connectivity kits
- Digital learning devices

2

Strengthening Hearts & Minds

Outcomes:

- Enhance mental well-being of families during a high-stress period with increased isolation during the planned Compulsory Universal Testing



- Online workshops with joint parent-child activities



- 1-on-1 counselling support for parents/caregivers



- Public awareness messages on child health and protection

3

Recovery & Resilience Building

Outcomes:

- Build family resilience
- Help children learn and go safely back to school



- Remote learning support



- (Online) workshops to enhance children's well-being through arts, sports, etc.



- (Online) seminars on parent/caregiver-well-being and positive parenting

1. ADDRESSING IMMEDIATE NEEDS



OUR DISTRIBUTIONS REACHED MORE THAN 5,000 FAMILIES

To help families keep healthy and safe during the 5th wave, Save the Children distributed more than 68,000 Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) kits, 20,000 children's masks, 29,000 adult masks, and 2,000 hand sanitizers and disinfectant sprays. To ensure children could continue to access their education and connect with psychosocial support, we distributed 1,000 local data cards, 700 pocket WiFi kits for internet connectivity, and 100 electronic tablets for learning. We also distributed supermarket vouchers valued at HK\$200,000 to help families ease the burden of putting food on their tables.



2. CHAMPIONING CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND MENTAL HEALTH

As face-to-face classes were suspended indefinitely during the 5th wave, we actively provided online learning services, tutoring, and homework support to bolster students' academic performance, and ease pressure on caregivers.

Recognising the significant impact the outbreak had on parents' emotional well-being, we also offered one-on-one women's counselling sessions and online parental stress relief groups to the parents of the children we supported. Our professional counsellors worked alongside parents to help them navigate their feelings and regain a sense of dignity and autonomy.



3. BUILDING RESILIENCE FOR RECOVERY

As children and their families emerged from the initial outbreak, we expanded our programming to enhance children's cognitive, social and emotional development. We implemented a new expressive arts programme designed to help children express their feelings and manage their emotions. We also ran activities including online and offline learning support, taught coding through Minecraft and Lego robotics to enhance children's digital literacy and life skills.

To support parents, we conducted positive parenting workshops to strengthen parent-child relationships, renewing families' relationships and hope for the future. To help caregivers develop greater self-awareness and strategies for coping with stress, we ran activities including women's art therapy groups, online counselling, wellness and yoga classes.



STORIES OF HOPE

"Thanks to the donor, now I don't need to use the mobile phone for online class and won't be bothered by typing on the phone's small touchscreen keyboard. I can also connect to stable network with the pocket WiFi".

From a child who received an electronic tablet and internet connectivity kit

"This food voucher came in at an unexpected moment. I really want to express my gratitude to Save the Children and the donor."

From a parent receiving a food voucher

Thanks to your generous support, we will continue to support the physical and mental health of children and families in Hong Kong as we emerge together from the pandemic.
 Click [here](#) to learn more about how we are changing children's lives in Hong Kong and around the world.

OUR WORK WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT OUR SUPPORTERS

Thanks to your support, we have provided hope for children and families impacted by Wave 5 of the COVID-19 pandemic!