

A full-page background image showing two young men diving into a body of water. The man on the left is in mid-air, upside down, wearing patterned swim trunks. The man on the right is also diving, wearing checkered swim trunks and a black swim cap. The background is a clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds, and the water is a deep blue. In the distance, a shoreline with green trees and a small structure is visible.

# NG WAH SPIRIT

**ISSUE 6**

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*Our Generation*

*What is a Youth?*

*Social Concerns*

*Films and Entertainment*

*Life*



# Editorial

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This year's issue of 'Ng Wah Spirit' English community magazine represents our commitment bringing our fellow schoolmates' unique ideas to you all. It is also a showcase of their involvement with and concern for social issues in and around Hong Kong. This new generation is always brushed with bizarre thoughts and their fantasy towards the hereafter! The letter section of this issue emphasises students' views and compassion, plus an urge for a promising future.

We are so pleased and proud to introduce here a diverse range of topics, from environment protection to the societal implications of drug abuse, to the over-commercialization of film appreciation. The Life Style section gives us some extremely insightful pieces, with their heart in mind regarding issues of educational reform and teens' lingering in karaoke lounges. We hope you enjoy this year's magazine...a testimony of and an insight into the complex, globalised and uncharted world of our generation.

We would like to express our gratitude to those whose help, inputs, and contributions that made this publication possible: our Supervisor Father T Law, Principal Dr F Wong, our teaching staff Mr W Wai, Ms A Chow, Ms A Tse, Ms W Y Wong, and Ms Y Y Lee, and finally our Journalism Programme tutor Mr P Stilley. Your invaluable advice and guidance brought this work to fruition.

May God bless you always,

The Editorial Board



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# What is a Youth?



## Taking a Gap Year

A “gap year”, for Hong Kong citizens, may sound strange. However, in some countries, like the United States or the United Kingdom, it is very common for graduates of secondary schools to take a year off before entering university, in order to gain work experience and to become more mature. There are pros and cons for taking a “gap year” as with a lot of things, but I would like to take a gap year if it was more the norm in Hong Kong.

The first advantage is that it can provide an opportunity for secondary school students to live independently. Having to create their own daily routine can help improve their sense of responsibility and self sufficiency. They can also improve their communication skills by meeting and talking to new people. If students are able to meet people from other countries, this provides a good chance to practice their English, or any other common foreign languages. This practice can improve their language skills dramatically.

Another advantage of students taking a gap year is that it may help broaden their horizons. When they work in other countries, they may meet people from all walks of life. Not only will they be more open-minded with cul-

tures, but also they could acquire some valuable experience. I can use myself as an example in this case; I always take the chance to share my own favourite local cuisine, Chinese dim sum, with foreigners. This helps me make new friends!

Although gap years have plenty of advantages, we should not overlook the negative side. Firstly, students may face difficulties or encounter problems when they enter the world of work. They may feel depressed and under more pressure because they have become used to a different lifestyle. As a result, they may fear their future career paths. This could consciously and unconsciously hinder their mental growth. When students return to university, they might not be able to concentrate well during study time, and as a result their academic results may be not satisfactory.

If we, as students, can't overcome the above obstacles, a gap year may do more harm than good, since it will destroy the positive aims of the gap year. Participants are not only supposed to gain work experience, but to gain maturity before entering university. Thus, it is essential for students to have the correct attitude when

taking a gap year, and should not waste this golden opportunity to gain experience.

To conclude, the pros of taking gap year outweigh the cons. Gap years can help students become more responsible and widen their vision too. If I were given an opportunity, I would take a year off before entering university and explore more!

Text by Chan Ho Yin, Matthew (S7C)





# Impetuous Fire

## Exploring the World

In western countries like the United Kingdom or the United States, many students take a year off, called a “gap year” after secondary school to gain work experience and maturity before entering university. But, is it really worthwhile? Let’s discuss the pros first.

On one hand, financial means is definitely one of the factors that must be taken into consideration when deciding whether or not to take a gap year. Students usually require a large amount of money to support their expenses in universities. However, not all families can provide full financial support to their children, so students need to find another path other than getting a scholarship, so working for a year is a good way to earn money. Moreover, there are a lot of benefits to be

gained from working in a job. For example, students will be able to widen their social circles by meeting with adults in different areas, instead of just wandering around with their school friends. These adults will be of great mentors or role models for the students, helping them become good members of society.

On the other hand, taking a year off means delaying one’s graduation from university. It could offer a way for students to evade from becoming a member of society, as the gap year does not monitor whether the students go to work or not, they may simply get a year of holiday to play and time could be wasted. Furthermore, meeting with adults in society sounds very positive in theory, but what if the adults they meet were gang members or criminals? It is not a

guarantee that all the people students will meet in their gap year will have a positive effect on the students, as they are not mature enough to stand against the darkness in society. It is possible that students may be led off on the wrong path.

If I were given a chance, I would surely take a year off, if it were acceptable in the Hong Kong educational system. I believe that the value of working before getting into university is much greater than the potential risks. It is essential to build up your social networks. If you want to be successful in your career path, taking a gap year is a double-edged blade, but you can only gain when you are willing to take risks.

Text by Wong Yat Sang (S7C)





## My View of the Young Generation

Dear Editor,

I have recently read a letter in the South China Morning Post, which argued our city has become lazy and rude. However, I strongly oppose this view. I am writing to express my opinions in our school newspaper.

The terms “Post 90s”, “Post 80s”, all refer to the young people in HK, implying that they are lazy, rude, and inconsiderate. There is no doubt that some young people are, but they are just a drop in the ocean, exceptions, rather than the whole generation. Some people are rude, for example, bumping into others without an apology, or not giving up seats to elderly people. As a result, others may think that all of us are just like this. Those rude individuals are only an unrepresentative sample, most of us are polite and gentle. At home, we are respectful to our parents, helping them with housework and looking after our brothers and sisters. At school, we are good students, talking politely to teachers, and working hard to get high

marks, and helping schoolmates to solve problems. In society most of us will participate in some voluntary work, to help those in need or to raise money for the poor. Most of us are polite and helpful, not rude or lazy.

The writer also says that today’s young people do not contribute to our society. However, I do not agree with this statement. Let’s look at some examples. Chan-Yi Hei, is a young person in Hong Kong. Although he is young, he has achieved a lot for Hong Kong. He has discovered a star in the universe, so the international foundation of the space decided to name the star “Chan-Yi Hei”. His achievement shows that our young people are able to make worthwhile contributions to Hong Kong. Now his nickname is “Son of the Star”!

Besides Hei, a lot of young people contribute to our society. So-Wah Wei is also from the younger generation. As we all know, he

is an Olympic medal winner and also a world champion. He has got a lot of medals for Hong Kong and he is an honor to Hong Kong people.

Not only he helped Hong Kong to gain lot of glory, but also he shows a spirit that all of us should learn, which is to never give up. When he was young, he could not walk like normal children. However, he became the world running champion. Never giving up is the key, he put in a lot of effort and he ran to the top of the world.

In these two examples, we have demonstrated that our young people in Hong Kong are not all lazy or rude, we can make differences and contribute positively to Hong Kong.

Yours,  
Chris

Text by Wong Hiu Tung (S6E)

# New Environment

## Adapting to the New Environment of Secondary School

Dear Brother,

Glad to receive your email! How are you recently? I know that you are struggling to adjust to secondary school. Be optimistic!

Perhaps you are feeling lonely and puzzled, but that's normal. You should make friends first. Friendship is an internal part of school life as friends accompany you almost anytime, and everywhere during school life. Friends give a helping hand in difficulties, and you can adapt to the new environment with them together, this helps to reduce your anxiety.

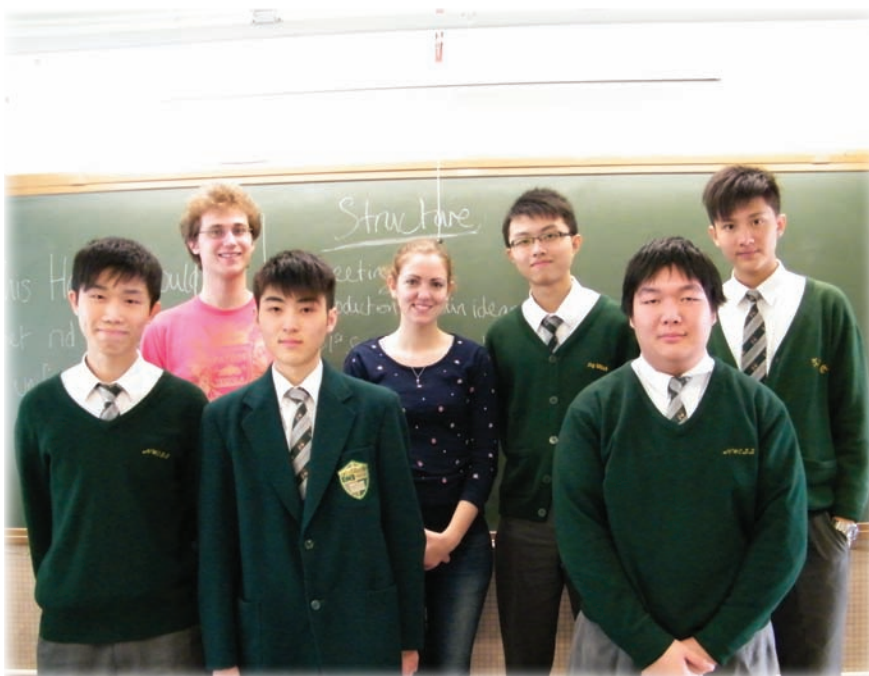
You should have conversations with your teachers or social workers. Not only do they help you adapt the environment, but they also give suggestions and solutions to you when you are in troubles or dilemmas.

Still, there are other things you need to remember. Don't make bad company. This type of person will almost certainly indulge themselves in online games, drugs, or even alcohol. I hope that you can avoid people like this, as it will affect your academic results and your health.

Study studiously! I hope you will have a fabulous time in secondary school!

Yours,  
Chris

Text by Tai Siu Yip (S6D)







Dear Brother,

I just read your email. I know that you are struggling to adapt to the new environment of secondary school life. Here I will give you some of my views, hoping they will help you to adapt to secondary school life.

First, what you should do is join a club. In secondary school, there are many clubs organised by students. You should join one based on your interests, as it will help you to make new friends.

Second, you should choose a sport you like and play with your new friends. Why do I say that? Because during sports games, you can learn how to work with your friends and also you may have a chance to join the school team. This can construct a strong bond between you and your school.

Third, you should hand in your homework on time. As we know, most secondary students have lots of homework, and if you want to enjoy your school life, you have to finish your homework first. Otherwise you will mess up everything.

After you meet some new friends at school, there are two things that you had better avoid. They are hanging out all day and fighting. In secondary school, there are many arguments between school mates every day. You should not fight for any reason, because it will ruin your life. You should not waste time doing nothing all the time. You have to know that the main purpose of secondary education is studying, not playing all the time. Therefore, I hope you can balance studying and playing well in your secondary school life.

I hope this advice will help you. I am sure that soon you will adapt to secondary school well. If you have any questions or feel frustrated, just give me a call or send me an email.

Yours,  
Chris

Text by Chan Ka Lok (S6D)







Dear Peter,

I have received your email and realised what your problem is. As a student, I know it is hard to adapt to a new environment, which has new students, a new campus, and many other things you need to face. Be strong! You can overcome this obstacle.

Joining different school clubs may help you to feel part of your school. Playing basketball on the court, learning instruments in the hall, having a fun day in the pool, all these activities can help you to release stress, also adapt to your new school, and even make new friends. Therefore, you should participate in different school clubs.

Making new friends is also a good way to adapt to your new school. Apart from joining different school clubs, you should make friends actively in your class, share study experiences, and have lunch with your classmates. Also, try to establish a good social network by making friends. Friendship is the strongest evidence to prove you are popular in school. Give it a try and you will be successful in your school. You can learn more about your school by communicating with your classmates. Anyway, you should not carry all the burdens on your shoulder, no matter how trivial, contact teachers or social workers if you need help.

Being successful in school and achieving a good result in the upcoming examination will be a great platform to show your abilities and confidence. There is no doubt that school performance is a major criteria on which people evaluate what kind of a student you are.

Remember I will always be there if you need any help. Secondary school life is a priceless experience, I'm sure you will love it! You will definitely be a successful student as long as you keep working towards your goals. I wish you all the best!

Yours sincerely,  
Chris

Text by Lam Ka Leung (S6D)

# Social Concerns



## Awareness of Being Environmentally-friendly

The reduction of pollution in the environment has long been a hot topic amongst the public and government in the last decade. A lot of effort has been put in by the public and government, and it is certain that Hong Kongers are becoming more aware of the environmental issues. There is a lot of evidence to prove my thoughts on this issue.

Air pollution is a major day-to-day concern. According to the environmental research by the government, 80% of particulates are emitted by diesel commercial transport. For example, minibus, buses, trucks and private cars. In order to act against such pollution, the government has introduced lots of laws and schemes to alleviate the problem. The government enacted the Motor Vehicle Idling Ordinance in December 2011. The driver is not allowed to switch on the engine more than 3 minutes in a 60 minute period when you are parking your car in the street. If the driver violates the law, a fixed penalty of HKD 320 is given to the driver. Most Hong Kongers agreed to the ordinance in the consultation period, they understand that the emissions

have a big impact on the environment. The government not only sets up the laws, but also pours money in to improve air quality. The government encourages drivers to change the Euro II to Euro IV fuel, which emits significantly less particulates and nitrogen dioxide. The government pays a one-off grant to the drivers when they apply. According to the news, the amount of blue sky per day increases every year which shows the effectiveness of the institutions.

The way we tackle waste pollution is another example of our concern about the environment. Last year, government set up the environmental levy scheme on plastic shopping bags. The aim being to reduce the use of the plastic bags. Consumers now need to pay 50 cents when they ask for a plastic bag. The use of plastic bags has decreased dramatically to 80% of the original use levels after the law was implemented. In schools, they also advocate environmental friendly activities. Schools use renewable and reusable utensils at lunchtime which largely reduces wastage. These examples ease our environmental problem.

Although government and the public have helped the environment, there is still room for improvement, for example, with light pollution. There is no regulation on the emission of light in Hong Kong. Business owners use light to capture the attention of the public, which is very serious. For example, houses in Causeway Bay use 60 floodlights to light their billboards which is really a nuisance. The government should be an example to lessen the use of electricity. The government should change the “Symphony of lights” to a weekly event instead of current every day event. The government should regulate the use of non-essential lighting during night time to alleviate the light pollution.

Undoubtedly, the people of Hong Kong are more environmentally-conscious and friendly than before, and I strongly believe that Hong Kongers have the ability to become fully environmentally friendly in the future if they follow the direction of the current environmental policy.

Text by Cheung Ho Pan (S7B)



# The Green City – Hong Kong

Going “Green” is currently a hot topic all over the world. In Hong Kong, there are more and more discussions on “green” issues like environmental problems, or how can the residents become more environmentally friendly. Whether it is the government, the residents or private companies in Hong Kong, everyone is concerned about this issue. Therefore, I believe that Hong Kong people are environmentally conscious and friendly, there are some examples to demonstrate as follows.

Recently, some “green” organisations advocated that the government should do something to make the city greener, and they are fighting for new laws. The government has been listening to their suggestions and discussing the issue seriously. They have set up many laws since then. For example, the plastic bags tax and punishment for leaving the car engine ticking for over three minutes are two effective laws to make the society greener. Such laws can really reduce the waste that the residents produce and the emission of greenhouse gas. But, it is not enough for only the government to take action. The actions

must be agreed by the residents, and they should obey the laws. Fortunately, Hong Kong residents, have been obeying laws, and thus the city becomes greener progressively. The cooperation between the government and residents is a great example to show that Hong Kong people are environmentally conscious and friendly.

There are not only green organisations! Hong Kong residents also want the city to become green. They always obey the rule of ‘3R’s – recycle, reduce and reuse. Many residents separate waste that can be recycled and throw it into recycle bins. In school, there are green campaigns, like planting trees. Schools also follow the instructions of the government to adjust the room temperature to 25.5C. We can see that a small effort made by every resident is making a big difference to society as a whole. The city can be greener if everyone takes action.

Hong Kong private companies do not just focus on their own benefits, they also participate in environmental campaigns. These days, many companies are aware that they use more energy than

they need to, which is wasteful. They have started reducing the usage of energy, for example turning off lights when they are not being used. Some big companies are willing to pay money for setting up some equipment or adjusting the design of building, to use sunlight to illuminate the office and thus reduce the usage of energy. Although it is costly, they are willing to pay it because the company knows it must face it. Private companies are one of the factors that can change society. If they take action immediately, the society will become greener faster and more people will be concerned about the environment.

To conclude, from the examples which I mentioned before, we can observe that everyone in Hong Kong, has a responsibility for the environmental problems. Hong Kong people are now becoming more concerned about these problems. In future, I believe that Hong Kong will become one of the biggest green cities in the world.

Text by Fung Cheuk Hei (S7B)





## A Greener Hong Kong

Are Hong Kong people becoming more and more environmentally conscious and friendly? People's views are divergent. In recent years, the Hong Kong government has launched several schemes to deal with various environmental problems in Hong Kong. However, having a scheme does not mean Hong Kongers are actually becoming more environmentally conscious or friendly: it all depends on the effectiveness of the scheme. Fortunately, the Hong Kong government has successfully issued policies that encouraged the citizens' attitude towards becoming more environmentally conscious and friendly.

The most effective campaign launched by the government is the "50-cents plastic bag levy". The environmental group, Green Power has conducted a survey through the internet to find out more information about the users of plastic bags and measure the effectiveness of this campaign. Most of the interviewees said they used less plastic bags and used reusable bags instead. Also, the number of plastic bags being dumped into the landfill sites has dramatically reduced by 70%.

Take my experience as a concrete example. After the campaign was launched, I brought my own reusable bag with me every day because I didn't want to spend 50 cents to buy a plastic bag.

The project of Hong Kong – Macau – Joining Bridge is also an environmental issue. Whether the project should be approved has sparked contentious arguments. The reason people oppose this project is because the project is using large sum of money to destroy the habitat of Chinese white dolphins. To construct the bridge, reclamation is needed. The mud and stone will be poured into the sea. According to a dolphin preserver, there are only about 20 Chinese white dolphins in Hong Kong. If people continue to pollute the water, the Chinese white dolphins will eventually become extinct. Most of the citizens are taking the initiative to voice their concerns. But this is a good thing as it shows the public's environmental consciousness has been enhanced.

Most of the pollution is caused by vehicles. Therefore, the government has stepped up efforts to

deal with this problem. The recent policy of "switching off the engine" has gained a lot of support from the public. Most of the drivers are willing to comply with this rule. I have gone in to the street to see whether or not the policy is effective. My observation is that most of the minibuses and taxis in the station do comply as they switch off their engines. Fresh air is what we all need, so we should take the responsibility to improve the air quality in Hong Kong.

It seems that Hong Kong people have played an active role in this campaign. They put the recyclable materials into proper recycling bins. Their active participation shows that they are more conscious of protecting the environment.

Whether or not Hong Kongers are becoming more and more environmentally conscious and friendly, no one really knows. But one thing is certain: as long as each individual takes the obligation in protecting our environment, Hong Kong will be on its first step to become greener.

Text by Hui Chun Kit (S7B)



# Are Hong Kong People Really Becoming More Environmentally Conscious?

From my point of view, I agree that Hong Kong people are becoming more and more environmentally conscious and friendly. Nowadays, the problems of pollution have gotten worse. There is air pollution, light pollution, land pollution and water pollution. Nevertheless, the government together with the general public have paid lots of attention to environment protection. Now, I am going to give some examples of what the government and the public have done to alleviate pollution in Hong Kong.

In these past few years, the government has been emphasizing that the two landfill sites in Hong Kong are going to become saturated within a decade. As a result, it has urged the public to reduce the use of plastic bags which have occupied a remarkable space in the landfill sites and are non-bio-degradable. The government has launched an “environmental levy on plastic shopping bags” scheme in order to discourage people from overusing plastic shopping bags. Predictably, many people stopped using plastic bags and instead, brought their own shopping bags.

Some creative people started manufacturing reusable shopping bags. These bags can be folded and packed into a small package so that people can put it in their handbags and bring it out easily. This convenient product accompanied with the levy launched by the government helped the amount of plastic bag waste to drop significantly.

Meanwhile, the government has also done a lot to tackle air pollution. For example, it provided financial subsidy to drivers as encouragement to change their vehicles from old model to more environmentally friendly ones. Moreover, the government and legislative council have recently approved the legislation which forces drivers to switch off their idling vehicle. The legislation also empowers policemen to warn or even charge the drivers, and fortunately many drivers are cooperative to stop idling their vehicle.

Last but not least, for water pollution, the government has already imposed “sewage treatment”. Because of the limited water resources on Earth, there

needs to be a change to deliver the message to cherish water. The fee will gradually increase bi-yearly to encourage people to reduce sewage discharge and in turn help the improvement of water quality in Hong Kong. According to the statistics presented by the government, more and more people have taken part and the total annual volume of water consumption has been decreasing gradually since 2008.

Based on the policies proposed by the government, along with the active participation by the public, it is reasonable to conclude that Hong Kong people are becoming increasingly environmentally conscious and friendly. If the policies and improvements can be retained, I believe that pollution will no longer be a serious problem in Hong Kong. We should appreciate the collaboration between the government and the general public towards protecting the environment.

Text by Hui Chun Kit (S7B)





## *Hong Kong: An Environmentally-friendly city?*

Recently, an informal statistic showed that Hong Kong people are willing to spend over ten dollars to buy an extra bag for shopping rather than using plastic bags, indicating that Hong Kongers are becoming more conscious of environmental protection.

It is sensible to believe that not only the public, but also the government has been working hard for environmental protection by encouraging everyone to recycle. In recent years, the government has addressed policies, purchased advertisements and offered financial support for recycling companies. For instance, the environmental levy on shopping bags charging 50 cents for each shopping bag has efficiently reduced the use of plastic bags by local consumers. This policy has successfully encouraged consumers to bring their own bags to shopping, although some of the local markets do not follow the policy.

Based on my personal observation and daily experience, the attitude and awareness towards environmental protection among teenagers has improved. Most of us would rather read E-magazines or E-newspapers online to reduce the consumption of paper. In school, several class materials are uploaded to the internet rather than distributed. These actions imply our concept of environmental concerns and our lifestyle is changing to adapt to this concept.

Just a few days before, TV news reported that the kitchen residue obtained in primary schools dropped to an acceptable level, due to the increasing consumption of organic agricultural products. The environmentally-friendly kitchen has been launched for few years in many primary and secondary schools, which basically changed students' lifestyles and significantly reduced the use of plastic tools, although the scheme had drawn complaints from par-

ents and students, it significantly raised environmental awareness among students in Hong Kong.

In addition, an increasing number of Hong Kong people would rather replace or avoid consuming shark-fin soup in order to reduce the impact on marine ecosystem. This indicates that more Hong Kongers are willing to support environmental protection by adjusting their eating habits.

According to the aforementioned phenomenon, it is reasonable to draw the conclusion that Hong Kong people are becoming more environmental conscious and friendly. Considering the efforts of the government and parental education, environmental protection is believed to be a growing trend and will transform our society into a better place.

Text by Lau Yung Lam (S7B)





## Let's Fight for a Greener Hong Kong

Whether Hong Kong people are becoming more and more environmentally conscious and friendly is a hot controversial issue. Those who agree on the issue think that the government has successfully imposed a series of policies which aimed at making Hong Kong greener. While those who oppose it believe that pollution problems are still very serious in Hong Kong. Personally, I do agree that Hong Kongers are becoming more aware and complying with the policies of environmental protection.

Reduce, reuse and recycle make up the basis of environmental protection and whether Hong Kong is becoming greener depends on whether these three elements are being followed. The government has set up different laws aiming to boost the public's concerns toward environmental protection. And the most significant one is the imposition of taxation on plastic bags.

Under the tax, 50 cents is added when asking for a plastic bag in order to introduce the promotion of BYOB (bring your own bag) scheme. Research shows that there is a significant reduction

on the use of plastic bags among citizens. In addition, production of biodegradable plastic bags instead of traditional plastic bags was implemented. Hong Kong is "reducing" and "recycling" which are the two basis of environmental protection.

In terms of the society, there have recently been more and more organisations concerning environmental protection being set up. All these organisations are aimed at raising awareness and concerns toward the environment among citizens. Some of these organisations such as the Green Peace are becoming well-supported and well-known among Hong Kongers.

Aiming to promote the needs of environmental protection, these organisations advertise the message of environmental concerns with mass media and they also introduce certain activities such as turn off the light at 8:00 p.m. for one hour at a particular day to fuel the public concerns toward reducing the use of non-renewable energy. Although these activities do not actually save much energy, they are successful in raising awareness and concerns toward

environmental issues.

Apart from the efforts of the HKSAR government and organisations promoting green environment, Hong Kong people are also contributing more to enhance their environment and reduce pollution. It's easy to see that there are more companies and schools trying to do something to save energy and to make a sustainable and greener environment.

Many schools in Hong Kong use the remaining food after students' lunch as fertilizers. This is actually beneficial because we both "reduce" and "reuse".

To make it simpler, the pollution problems are still very serious in Hong Kong, and it's also believed that the road to successful environmental protection is still very long. But with the joint-efforts between the government and self-awareness of the public to "reduce", "reuse" and "recycle" which are the basis of environment protection, Hong Kong is definitely doing better and better.

Text by Law Ting Long (S7B)



## *Fight Back for A Greener Hong Kong*

Environmental issues among Hong Kong have become a day-to-day hot topic, and are wildly discussed in society. The argument is that Hong Kong people should become more and more environmentally conscious and friendly. The Hong Kong government set up campaigns against pollution problems.

Undeniably, the main causes of the pollution problems need to be solved immediately, for example, air pollution. One of the strategies of the government is the “Switch off Idling Vehicles” campaign. Laws have been set to limit the discharge of air pollutants such as carbon dioxide and sulphide compounds from vehicles that are parked on roadsides. When taxis and vans are waiting, they should turn off their motors. Apart from the above, the government has also made a lot of effort to reduce the level of pollution. For exam-

ple, the legislative council is now processing and discussing how tall buildings around the harbour are blocking the wind which helps clear air pollutants. The government protection organisations are forcing the companies to work out methods to solve the screening effect.

Light pollution is another example. It is difficult to make changes of the current situation since lights and illuminations provide huge economic value in Hong Kong. However, protection organizations managed to increase the number of citizens to join the “turn of the light for one hour” campaign. Furthermore, most of the government departments and enterprises in Hong Kong now use low-energy light bulbs (LED) instead of traditional light bulbs.

Water pollution also must be addressed. Excessive amount of

liquid waste is being discharged into the surrounding ocean. The longer we wait to take action, the dirtier the harbour becomes. As a result, the government has established the polluted discharge fee in order to manipulate the discharge of pollutants into the harbour.

All the work done by the government and environment protection groups such as Green Peace motivate citizens and smooth the progress to keep Hong Kong green. Here I have provided evidences to show that the level of concern of the Hong Kong people towards a greener environment has improved.

Text by Lee Chuen Mau (S7B)



# Films and Entertainment

## *Pros and Cons of Product Placement in Films*

Dear School Editor,

I am writing to discuss the pros and cons of product placement in films.

A few days ago, I thought I would watch a good film. I was convinced by the film review, however, it was bad! The film was spoilt by shots of consumer products. Though it may be needed, it makes the film less interesting.

The film I watched is Spider-man 3. It is popular and it has many good reviews. Maybe it has something to do with the message of "heroism". Many people are drawn to the extraordinary power that the characters possess. But, this message disappears because of the consumer products shown in the film.

First of all, it is really irritating: in moments of tension, it gets ruined

by a close up shots of consumer products. The movie was reaching its highest point of tension. All of us were very excited to see the battle between Spiderman and Sandman. This excitement gets ruined when Spiderman's phone started vibrating suddenly. The shot quickly jumped from the fighting scene to the phone. The phone was an iPhone, a product of Apple. The tense atmosphere was quickly ruined. The iPhone was shot deliberately. The film producer wanted to get Apple's sponsorship which was essential for the film making.

Frankly speaking, I can't deny the importance of film sponsorships. Yet, I want to remind all film producers to pay closer attention to the placement of products. This is because a bad placement of products may disrupt the story.

It may ruin the atmosphere and mood of the film.

I understand that consumer products in films have benefits since famous products can add characteristics to the characters or the films. If a character owns an iPhone, a well-known brand, he may appear as a rich businessman. It helps to convey the information or status of the characters to the audience.

Shots of consumer products seem to play a fair role in the film. But the audience buying tickets hoping to watch a good film, do not want to have any glimpse of consumer products on the screen.

Yours,  
Chris

Text by Tsang Kwok Wai (S6E)





## *A Connection of Advertisements?*

Last night, I watched a film called the Devil Wears Prada. This film is riveting and marvelous. It is based on a famous novel and many people watch the movie because the novel was very popular. The film reviews however vary. Some people praise it for the good script writing, whereas some people criticise the whole film saying that it is just propaganda of brands.

For Devil Wears Prada, the cinema-goers' enjoyment was strongly tied to the frequent shots of high brand products. In countless occasions, the characters in the film wore clothes from Prada, Dolce & Gabbana, etc. Apart from the clothes, a prestigious mobile phone company, Ban & Olufsen appeared in the film. In my opinion, showing high brand products is no doubt a form of advertisement. I am a cinema goer that went to the cinema to see the

film, so I was not happy because this movie is filled with advertisements.

Many people watch films because they want to take a break from reality. This film helps you do that very well. However, it's over the top. It's almost like watching a few hours of advertisements on consumer products. In other words, we almost feel as if we are being cheated. I understand that it is inevitable for the film to exaggerate the products. However, what if people get sucked into the movie concept and buy the products and find it not up to his/her expectation? Who should bear the responsibility then? I think showing high brand products in film will trigger a series of problems, even legal ones.

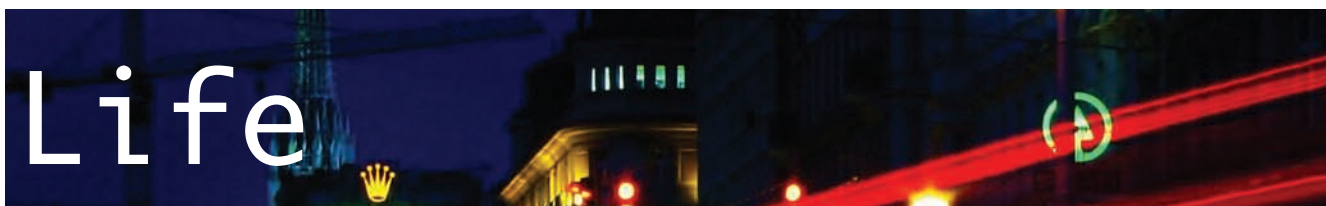
I think movie makers use this film technique to protect themselves from losing too much mon-

ey, just in case the film doesn't make it to the big screens or become popular. This technique ensures steady income from the product companies which can cover any losses from film production. Also, by displaying products in films help enhance the quality of the film. In a sense, it acts as a quality assurance.

Overall, I do not recommend this film because it is filled with advertisements of consumer products. From the perspective as a movie-goer, I want to enjoy the film without advertisements. Moreover, I think movie makers should try their hardest to produce a movie. It is upsetting that they use advertisements to ensure income. Try to imagine a world where every movie maker did that, would you still want to go to the cinema to watch a movie?

Text by Chan Lai Man (S6E)





## *Spend Time and Money in Karaoke Lounges Wisely*

Karaoke has become more and more popular in Hong Kong nowadays. A lot of young people spend time and money to go to Karaoke lounges. Why is Karaoke so popular? This is because a Karaoke lounge is a good place to relax and sing. Today lots of young people have at least one music idol. Most of them love singing their idols' songs and the only place where people can do this is in a Karaoke lounge. We can sing as loudly as we want and it will not affect our neighbours. In Hong Kong, there is not enough space to live in. Some families are closely packed in a building. If we sing in our home, it will probably affect or disturb other people's living conditions.

Also, the purpose of a Karaoke

lounge is for the people to relax and enjoy. Nowadays, students are under lots of pressure with heavy workloads. Adults are also under pressure, they have busy work schedules or meetings. None of us has the time to relax. If this continues, we will have emotional and psychological problems. And that is why Karaoke is popular because it gives us an environment to relax and have fun.

But on the other hand, if we go to Karaoke lounges too often, it will affect our daily life. As mentioned before, students have their homework and occasional exams and workers have busy schedules and meetings. If they go to Karaoke too often, it will take away a lot of their time. Time is money. It is very unwise to waste too much

time for singing songs. I think people should maintain a balance and go to Karaoke about once a month at most. Singing in Karaoke rooms will help us relax but also make us feel tired. So don't go to Karaoke every day. Personally, Karaoke lounges give me a bad image because they serve alcoholic drinks. There will be lots of problems when people drink too much.

In conclusion, singing in Karaoke lounges has advantages and disadvantages. We should go to them to relax and have fun but not spend too much money and time. We should maintain a balance.

Text by Wong Yiu Chung (S7C)





## My Ideal Part-time Job

My ideal part-time job would be to work as an AMS (Auxiliary Medical Service) ambulance man. I would like to work in a hospital and an ambulance depot as a career, and I think that working part-time as an ambulance man would be an excellent way to gain experience and knowledge of medicine and first-aid.

First of all, I think that being an ambulance man would be a meaningful job. The reason is that an ambulance man is constantly dealing with patients and helping them. I very much enjoy helping people. I currently have a course in Accident and Emergency Train-

ing Centre Hospital Authority and I love obtaining medical knowledge and skills.

In addition, the duties of AMS can be very versatile as it is divided into emergency and general duties. In times of emergency and natural disaster, AMS will supplement the medical and health services by providing the right treatment on the spot, to convey casualties to hospitals, and to care for patients at both acute and convalescent hospitals. Besides, AMS also reinforces the regular ambulance services and provides first-aid and coverage at public functions.

Being an AMS, we must have first-aid knowledge and skills, so before being on duty, we must complete 100-hour training. I think that the training will be very challenging but I like challenges. I think I can do the job well and I think I am a helpful person that likes to cope with different challenges.

In conclusion, I would like a part-time job as an AMS ambulance man to gain different experience and to meet some new challenges.

Text by Chan Hung Yam (S6B)





## High Time for Transformation

Being generous, you can say that Hong Kong students are hard working and enduring. Being harsh, you can argue that they are rote learning machines. Indeed, students in Hong Kong have to study very hard because they are competitive amongst themselves and in examinations. Under such an exam-oriented society, emergence of thousands of bookworms is an inevitable corollary.

Under such a pressurized education and examination system, students are forced to face madness. Urged by the public, especially from the students, the Education Department has recently considered changing the three-year university curriculum to four years, while shortening secondary education from seven years to six years, so as to create a healthier and more carefree learning environment.

Although this new education system sounds great, it has imperfections.

First, stability is one of the main

factors that enables comprehensive development in Hong Kong. The new education system will disturb the stability and will lead the society to social unrest and uncertainty. Moreover, someone said that we should attribute the prosperity and equilibrium obtained nowadays to the well-planned and well-managed education system. Over the past years, this education system pushed the students and produced many people which are full of talent. Some sort of shortcoming is inevitable in any system.

The new education system also has its benefits. Many students face tremendous pressure and stress once they've decided to study in Hong Kong. In the older education system, students have to complete two examinations and several quizzes within one academic year. On top of that, they have to face rigorous public examinations, which are key to university entrance. Chains of examinations may put pressure on students, who then may suffer from psychological stress. Oppo-

sitely, cutting the secondary education curriculum into one public examination may significantly reduce pressure. From the psychological and physical aspect, the new education system is admittedly good news for the students.

Examinations are definitely not the only road to success. There are other ways of becoming successful. Hong Kong should take western education systems as a reference. Western education pays more attention to the development of systematic analytical skills and critical thinking rather than just exam results, and the students manage to obtain a successful career and a bright future. Hence, our educational system should adapt from this model. As a result, the shortening of secondary education curriculum and the abolishment of one more examination should be the first step in achieving this goal.

Text by Mui Chui Ming (S6E)



## Drug Abuse

There has been much discussion of drug abuse in school. Obviously, drug abuse is becoming a serious issue. The government is even considering implementing a scheme that prevents students from abusing drugs. For me, student drug abuse stems from students who don't have proper education or who lack of understanding of drugs. There are many risks of drug abuse:

First of all, drugs have bad effects on health. The majority of drug users hold the view that drugs are only some medicine which can help them relax. This statement is hardly true. The majority of drugs will destroy our health both physically and mentally. When you take drugs, it is only a matter of time from becoming an addict. Getting addicted to drugs is unavoidable. After using drugs for a long time, your brain, heart, and skin will be seriously harmed. Moreover, you may suffer from mental diseases such as illusion and anorexia. Consequently, drug users are never healthy people.

The scars resulted from taking drugs will never recover. So why are you still interested in drugs?

In addition, when you take drugs, it can disrupt your future. Many people, especially students, give into drugs in order to please their friends. They never think that their future is in jeopardy. Remember that if you accept drugs, your true friends will leave you, your parents will be disappointed with you and your society will label you as being rebellious. It will be hard for you to have a successful career. If you abuse drugs, your life goal will be nothing more than a dream.

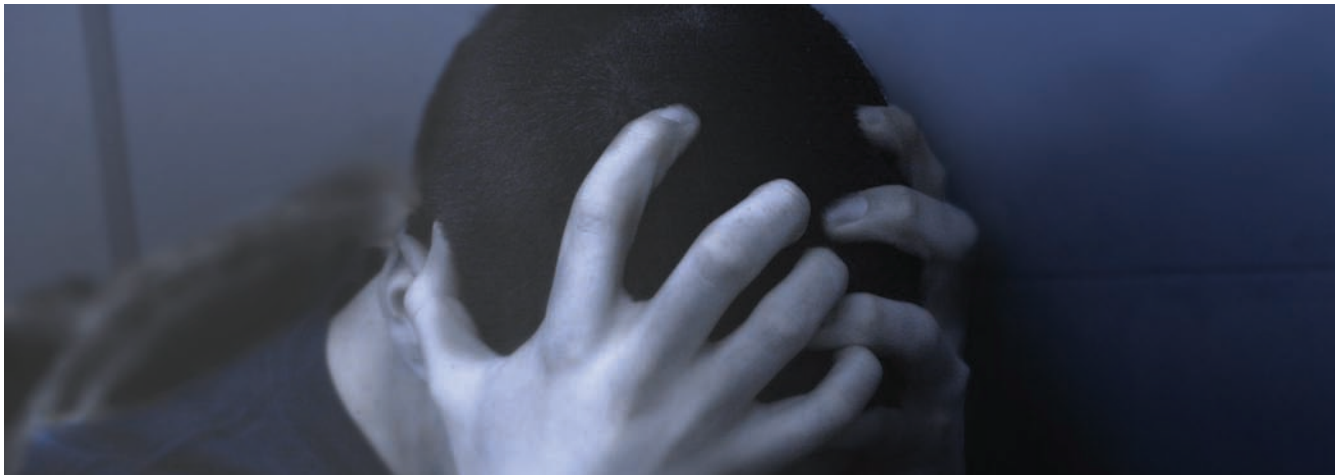
If you don't know how to reject drugs, I suggest that you just say "NO!" without any hesitation. No matter how your friends may try to convince you, you should insist on your stance. Do not take drugs owing to peer pressure. If you are still unsure, teachers and social workers may be of good assistance to help you solve the problem.

Our school has a carrot-and-stick system to ensure no students will be the victim of drugs. Moreover, our school educates students by holding drug talks regularly and engaging more social workers to prevent students from drugs. These methods provide a platform for students to gain more information and understanding about drugs. Also, our school keeps in close contact with the police. If the school discovers any drug users, the user will be punished by the police. Finally, our school pays more attention to those who come from a single-family or a low-income family. We provide counselling and extra classes on self-esteem establishment to ensure the students from the risks of drug abuse.

All in all, we will try our best efforts to keep away drug abuse from our school and students.

Text by Lam Ka Leung (S6D)





## Say No!

In recent years, drug abuse is becoming a serious issue. We all know that drug abuse is bad as it damages our physical and mental health. But, do you know the effects and consequences of drug abuse? Let me explain in the following paragraphs.

There are many risks of drug abuse. When you smoke or take drugs, the chemical substances go to your lungs and stomach and are absorbed into your blood. Those harmful substances will travel up to your brain to cause some serious damage. Of course, you will not get sick immediately. However, those substances will turn you into an addict and you will end up having to take drugs more often, regularly or even every day. Those substances will slow down your thinking speed, affect your judgement and demolish your nerve system. For example, in times of danger, you will not be able to react fast enough to protect yourself. Also, you will not be able to do anything that requires brain activity, such as doing homework, thinking, dealing with different problems, etc. When you abuse drugs, you may also feel nervous at all times. You will not be able to sleep well at night. You may start experiencing the many side effects, such as sweating,

feeling disgusted, etc. As you can see, drugs affect your body and cause a lot of health problems.

Taking drugs is not a wise decision as it brings many negative effects to your future. First, it affects your judgement and concentration so you will not be able to perform well in your academics. Second, taking drugs may mean that you have to do something illegal because drugs are illegal in Hong Kong. On top of that, drugs can be very expensive. Many people fall in to a loop hole where they will take drugs, get addicted, use up all their money and go broke. When you are addicted to drugs but don't have enough money to buy drugs, you may start risking your life in order to get what you want. You may even do something illegal that will get you arrested by the police. If that happens, you will have to spend a part of your lifetime in jail. Do you think it is worth it?

The main reason for students to take drugs is due to peer pressure. People, especially teenagers, find it hard to stand up to their friends. I'm sure all of us have experienced this. Has your friend ever convinced you to do something you were unsure of or uncomfortable with? If your friends

offer you to take drugs, don't accept it! Don't think that it is fine or that you're only taking it once. You should reject him/her and say that you're not interested. If this method does not work, you need to turn away and find help. If your friend peer pressures you to take drugs, he/she is not worth your time because true friends would not do something that will hurt each other. If you have a friend that is addicted to drugs and if you value your friendship, you need to find professional help for him. Do not follow your friend and take drugs with him to keep your friendship.

There are some talks organised by our school which talks about the risks of drug abuse. Also, there is plenty of comprehensive information about drugs abuse on the information board. If students want to know more about drug abuse, you can get your answer. As drug abuse rises, our school has formed a group of teachers and social workers aimed to help those students who are at risk. If you find someone or know someone with a drug problem, please contact the Chairman of this group, Mr. Smith.

Remember to say NO to drugs!

Text by Ng Ming Yin (S6D)

## **Editorial Board** *S6A, S6B, S6C, S6D, S6E, S7A, S7B & S7C (2011 - 2012 Academic Year)*

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