

新聞資料 *Media Information*

70% of children have never touched mimosa 80% went to countryside for barbeque and play Environmental education lacks groundwork

(20 August 2007, Hong Kong) NWSH Green Kindergarten Network, established by NWS Holdings Limited (“NWS Holdings” or the “Group”, HK stock code: 0659) and Green Power just announced a study on the knowledge and experience with nature of young children. The result showed that today’s children lack awareness on nature, hindering future environmental protection and ecological conservation effort.

The survey, conducted in April 2007, with a focus on children’s countryside experience and knowledge on local animals, interviewed 104 pre-school children of three to five years old (see App. I and II for questionnaire and results). The survey showed that most children had yet to learn to explore and search for interesting matters from nature. Some of them even disliked the countryside. Young children should have the most inquisitive mind as nature is an ideal environment for inspiring thought and providing first-hand experiences for them. However, the survey revealed that many children might have missed the chance to explore and learn from nature. Indeed, without real contact and experience of nature, it is hard for children to cultivate a passion for it, least for environmental education to be carried out.

Ms Maria Cheung, Senior Manager - Corporate Communication of NWS Holdings, suggested that in teaching about the plants and animals, teachers and parents can also point out their habitats so that children would gain a basic idea of their distribution in Hong Kong. NWSH Green Kindergarten Network has published “Hong Kong Biodiversity Map” in July 2007 which introduces the distribution of local plants and animals. The programme also organizes field trips for teachers and students from kindergartens and child centers in Hong Kong, enabling young children to appreciate nature.

Dr Cheng Luk Ki, Division Head of Scientific Research & Conservation Department of Green Power, remarked that although parents may take their children to the countryside, many simply view the countryside as a playground for barbeque or playing and keep in their hands video games and toys, which made children lose the curiosity on nature easily. He suggested parents and school teachers to encourage children to observe nature and sense nature with their sight, hearing, smelling and touch, under safe conditions. This would be a precious experience for young children.

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This press release will be posted to the Group’s website (www.nwsh.com.hk) and the official website of NWSH Green Kindergarten Network (www.greenkindergarten.net).

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Enclosure

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NWS Holdings Limited

NWS Holdings Limited ("NWS Holdings", Hong Kong stock code: 0659), the infrastructure and service flagship of New World Development Company Limited (Hong Kong stock code: 0017), embraces a diversified range of businesses in Hong Kong, Mainland China and Macau. Its **Infrastructure** portfolio includes Roads, Energy, Water and Ports projects. Its **Service & Rental** division comprises Facilities Rental (*the management of Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre and ATL Logistics Centre*), Contracting (*Hip Hing Construction Group and NWS Engineering Group*), Transport (*New World First Bus, Citybus and New World First Ferry*), etc

Green Power

Green Power was founded in 1988 by a group of dedicated volunteers concerned about local environmental affairs and problems. We have always put environmental education as our first and foremost priority because we believe that education is the ultimate way of transforming our thinking and behaviour

NWSH Green Kindergarten Network

NWSH Green Kindergarten Network was set up in April 2005. It is the first environmental education programme designed for pre-school educators in Hong Kong, and up till now, over 50% of kindergartens and child care centres have already registered as members. The programme provides a resource platform of environmental education for kindergartens and child care centres in Hong Kong. By providing free teaching materials, training workshops and field trips, NWSH Green Kindergarten Network aims at nurturing environmental awareness among the young generation. All kindergartens and child care centres in Hong Kong can join the programme without charge.

To promote environmental education, numbers of activities were held. For instance, Break Guinness World Record with Little Palms. 3,100 pupils and teachers from 65 member kindergartens of NWSH Green Kindergarten Network participated in the event. They together produced the world largest palm paint, which broke the Guinness World Record then. In 2006, we have conducted an survey on kindergarten students' cognition on environmental issues. Results revealed that most of the school children lack concepts concerning origins of natural resources. 60% of them have never sat in a lawn, reflecting that school children focus too much on acquiring knowledge and ignore the importance of environmental awareness. The survey also suggested that 80% of pre-school educators thought that the market was in lack of teaching materials regarding environmental education while about 50% of them expressed that they did not have adequate training in the corresponding area.

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Photo 1: Ms Maria Cheung, Senior Manager - Corporate Communication of NWS Holdings (left) and Dr Cheng Luk Ki, Division Head of Scientific Research & Conservation Department of Green Power (right) introduced a “Hong Kong Biodiversity Map” published by NWSH Green Kindergarten Network.



Photo 2: Ms Maria Cheung (left, second row) and Dr Cheng Luk Ki (right, second row) pictured with the children who were holding pots of mimosa.



Photo 3: A parent encouraged her daughter to touch the mimosa as well as to observe nature with her senses.



Appendix I: Questionnaire

“Children’s Knowledge and Experience on Nature in Hong Kong” Questionnaire

1. Can the following animals be found in Hong Kong?

	Yes	No	Don't Know
a) Lion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Owl	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Giraffe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Hippopotamus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Bat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Can you identify the animal in the photograph?

Ans.: _____

3a) Have you ever been to the countryside?

Ans.: Yes No (go to question c)

b) What did you do in the countryside? (can provide multiple answers)

Ans. : _____

c. i) Do you like going to the countryside?

Ans. : Yes No

c. ii) Why? _____

4a) Have you ever touched a mimosa plant?

Ans. : Yes No

b) How did you feel upon touching mimosa? Why have you never touched mimosa?

Ans.: _____

Appendix II: Survey Results

“Children’s Knowledge and Experience on Nature in Hong Kong” Questionnaire

No. of children interviewed: 104 pre-school children aged 3 to 5

1. Can the following animals be found in Hong Kong?

	Yes	No	Don’t know
	No. of respondents (%)	No. of respondents (%)	No. of respondents (%)
a) Lion	43 (41%)	54 (52%)*	7 (7%)
b) Owl	42 (40%)*	50 (48%)	12 (12%)
c) Giraffe	45 (43%)	51 (49%)*	8 (8%)
d) Hippopotamus	34 (33%)	50 (48%)*	20 (19%)
e) Bat	35 (34%)*	53 (51%)	16 (15%)

*correct answer

2. Can you identify the animal in the photograph? (photo of tadpole)

Correct answer	Incorrect answer	Cannot provide answer
No. of respondents (%)	No. of respondents (%)	No. of respondents (%)
51 (49%)	15 (14%)	38 (37%)
	Examples: mouse, snake, dragonfly	

3a) Have you ever been to the countryside?

Yes	No (go to question c)	Don’t know
No. of respondents (%)	No. of respondents (%)	No. of respondents (%)
76 (73%)	26 (25%)	2 (2%)

b) What did you do in the countryside? (can provide multiple answers)

Play and barbeque	Learning about nature	Forgotten
No. of respondents (%)	No. of respondents (%)	No. of respondents (%)
62 (82%)	9 (12%)	5 (6%)
Examples: barbeque, playing in the playground, eating	Examples: observing plants and animals, feeding fish	

c. i) Do you like going to the countryside?

Yes
No. of respondents (%)
89 (86%)

No
No. of respondents (%)
12 (11%)

Don't know
No. of respondents (%)
3 (3%)

c. ii) Why? Reasons to go

Play and barbeque
No. of respondents (%)
74 (83%)
Examples: barbeque, can play in the playground

Get in touch with nature or enjoy nature
No. of respondents (%)
11 (12%)
Examples: fresh air, many trees, beautiful scenery

Others
No. of respondents (%)
4 (5%)
Examples: never been to the countryside

Reasons not to go

Dirty
No. of respondents (%)
9 (75%)

Others
No. of respondents (%)
3 (25%)
Examples: many mosquitoes, don't know what countryside is, do not want to go to distant places

4a) Have you ever touched a mimosa plant?

Yes
No. of respondents (%)
28 (27%)

No
No. of respondents (%)
76 (73%)

b) How did you feel upon touching mimosa?

Answer (Observation/touch)
No. of respondents (%)
8 (29%)
Examples: automatically fold up upon touching, very soft and smooth

Answer (Positive feelings)
No. of respondents (%)
15 (53%)
Examples: very funny, delightful, interesting

Answer (Negative feelings)
No. of respondents (%)
4 (14%)
Examples: afraid, stink, fear of clipping own finger

Forgotten
No. of respondents (%)
1 (4%)

Why have you never touched mimosa?

Afraid
No. of respondents (%)
49 (64%)

Avoid
No. of respondents (%)
21 (28%)

Others
No. of respondents (%)
6 (8%)
Examples: no idea what mimosa is, never touched one, never seen one