

Central and Local Governments Work Hand-In-Hand to Safeguard Well-Being of Schoolchildren 13 Counties and Cities Commended for Excellence in Health Promotion Efforts

(Photo/Text: Li Hsiu-I, Division of Student Affairs and School Security)



The Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Welfare, county and city governments, experts and academics, and school communities are working together on the Health Promoting School Program, which brings together resources in the interest of a diverse range of measures aimed at improving the health of school children. An awards ceremony was held at National Taiwan Normal University on March 31, 2021, to commend 13 counties and cities that have achieved outstanding results in health promotion in 2019. New Taipei City, Taoyuan City, and Changhua County were awarded the Distinguished Honor Award, while Keelung City, Taipei City, Hsinchu County, Hsinchu City, Taichung City, Chiayi County, Tainan City, Kaohsiung City, Yilan Country, and Taitung County were awarded the Excellent Honor Award.

Distinguished Honor Award winner New Taipei City has identified schools with health screening data not meeting national standards as High Priority Schools and further determined school-specific health-related issues. The city government has also carried out health promotion efforts and provided students with a full range of health services through the use of effective strategies and consolidation of resources from various public and private organizations. In addition, board games have been used in workshops for teachers in school clusters covered by the National Health Insurance (NHI) scheme for educators to learn about NHI-related knowledge and skills through a gamefied approach. In Taoyuan City, schools have established inter-school alliances and organized arts and cultural competitions to drive the Health Promoting School program. The city government has also set up the Shennong Academy in collaboration with the local pharmacist association to educate students, parents, and teachers on knowledge pertaining to the use of medicinal drugs. Meanwhile, in Changhua County, the city government has advocated for banning sweetened beverages in schools, working "hydration time" into class schedules, and keeping sugar levels on campuses low. The city government has also worked with the local dentist association to assist schools in promoting school-based oral healthcare programs.

As one of the counties and cities that received the Excellent Honor Award, Keelung City consolidated resources from parties such as the Department of Health, dentist associations, and tertiary institutions in their health promotion campaigns for schools, including creating Vision Passbooks and short films on oral hygiene. The Taipei City government has worked with industry partners, public agencies, and academic institutions and carried out campaigns pertaining to sustainable development such as "Don't Waste Food Waste" and "From Farmland to Table" in order to teach students to cherish food and also to form healthy eating habits. Hsinchu County has developed a set of teaching aid named "The King of Health Strategies", which incorporates information on six major health-related themes into an adventure game that provides edutainment for students. The Hsinchu City government has teamed up with the Department of Health, local pharmacist and dentist associations, medical institutions, and the community to organize health promotion events focusing on health-related issues. Taichung

City came up with a set of teaching aid titled “Non-Smoking Families+” consisting of a healthy living handbook and a jigsaw puzzle, organized activities under the Health Academy, as well as a city-wide inter-class rope skipping competition to encourage students, parents, and teachers to practice healthy living.

Chiayi County has set educational objectives such as "Inculcating good habits" and "Prioritizing health" for schools in the county and carried out food and farming education using the "Support local, go seasonal" slogan to teach school children the concept of balanced diets. Tainan City has strengthened its inter-school strategic alliance and tapped on a variety of health care and community resources to allow mobile oral hygiene clinics to serve students in various schools, prevent cigarette and betel nut use, and inculcate good medication habits among students. In addition, the city government has also provided free optical services to disadvantaged students living in remote areas. Kaohsiung City has established a Student Health and Fitness Management System for students in elementary and high schools to identify high-risk students and provide immediate assistance to them by adopting a school-hospital-community tripartite model. Yilan County pioneered the 30-Minute Break Program to encourage children to participate in outdoor activities. Besides organizing courses to teach parents health-related skills and knowledge, schools have also opened their doors to dentists who conducted dental checkups for students from grades one to nine. Taitung County has created professional communities for the purpose of health promotion and used Line in their Home-School Partnership Program to remind students to brush their teeth before going to bed. The city government has also worked with the local dentists' association to engage dentists to provide fluoride treatment for students on campus.

K12EA pointed out that good health is the foundation of learning. Hence, the administration will continue to carry out inter-ministerial collaborations and consolidate resources to encourage schools to keep up with the Health Promoting School Program. At the end of the day, K12EA hopes to develop health promotion campaigns and activities that are literacy-oriented and

tailored to the needs of each school. On top of that, in 2021, K12EA will also carry out the Evaluation of the 2020 Health Promoting School Program – Pre-test and Post-test Comparison and Selection of Campus Health Anchor. For more information, please visit the website of the Health Promoting School Program. K12EA looks forward to receiving submissions from various schools.