

Chapter VII Conclusion

1. The Commission on Youth welcomes the Chief Executive's concern to address the issue of continuing development and employment opportunities for non-engaged youth. The issue of non-engaged youth is the tip of an iceberg of the larger issue of unemployment in Hong Kong. If ways can be found to sustain the continuing development and expand the employment opportunities for non-engaged youth, this will no doubt be welcome by not just non-engaged youth, but also the community at large. The young people who are facing barriers for learning and work will become contributing members of our community.

2. In studying the needs and behaviours of non-engaged youth, the Commission confirms that there is an urgent need to address the underlying causes of youth disengagement and youth unemployment. The young people cannot be blamed for these two social phenomena. These issues have to be tackled through family cohesiveness, education reform and economic restructuring.

3. The Commission would like to put forward the following recommendations and words of exhortation to all the stake-holders of this important issue:-

3.1 *Government*

The following are several key actions that can demonstrate the Government's determination to promote continuing development and unemployment opportunities for non-engaged youth.

3.1.1 Setting up of a mechanism to co-ordinate efforts on providing continuing development and employment for youth (paragraphs 16 in Chapter VI)

3.1.2 Reallocation of resources – the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund could be a possible funding source for projects related to meaningful engagement of non-engaged youth. The Continuing Education Fund could be the funding source for projects related to continuing education for non-engaged youth.

3.1.3 Consider tapping existing funding sources (such as Lotteries Fund) or setting up a Research and Development Fund to support new initiatives or pilot projects related to continuing development and employment opportunities for non-engaged youth, as such pilot projects may eventually benefit unemployed people in other age groups (see paragraph 4 in Chapter VI for such initiatives and pilot projects).

3.1.4 Reprioritizing services – in view of the large number of non-engaged youth, and the potential risks they are facing

(emotional risks and risk behaviours), priorities should be given to the following services:-

- Meaningful engagement of non-engaged youth
- Education and supporting services to the families with non-engaged youth
- Strengthening the vocational education and counseling before students leave schools

3.1.5 Refocusing the assessment and accreditation mechanism for formal education and vocational training to increase the sense of success and competency of the young people with diversity of intelligence and skills; education and supporting services to the families with non-engaged youth.

3.1.6 Providing multiple tracks of education and training beyond the 9 years of basic education to cover all youth aged 16 to 17; to increase the youth's opportunities to pursue formal education beyond Form 5; to open up new tracks of vocational training to match the future labour market (local, mainland China and overseas).

3.1.7 Broadening and strengthening on-job training schemes, and developing an outcome-based on-job training mechanism.

3.1.8 Formulating policies and providing resources to facilitate the development of the following sectors with the potential for job creation, not only for youth:-

- Creative Industries
- Sports
- Arts and culture
- Recreation
- Information Technology
- Manufacturing
(paragraphs 17-22 in Chapter VI)

3.1.9 Exploring on-job training and employment opportunities for non-engaged youth in Mainland China and overseas (paragraph_23 in Chapter VI).

3.1.10 Consider restructuring and expanding the Employee Retraining Board's scope of service to cover the needs of non-engaged youth. The development of an integrated, outcome-based framework with necessary hardware, software and human-ware to execute and monitor the various programmes is important (paragraphs 10-12 in

Chapter VI).

3.2 *Private Sector*

Youth employment is not an issue to be tackled by the Government alone. The private sector is an important partner. The following are key areas of concern:

- 3.2.1 Providing on-job training opportunities for non-engaged youth; strengthening the skills and mechanism for on-job training.
- 3.2.2 Setting up a special fund to assist the training of young people with the aptitude to enter the creative industries.
- 3.2.3 Starting pilot projects in Mainland China and overseas for on-job training of non-engaged youth, with outcome measures and monitor mechanism, under partnership programme with Government and non-governmental organizations (paragraph 23 in Chapter VI)

3.3 *Parents*

Parents play a pivotal role in the personal development and career development of the younger generation. Parental care and support is most important, and parental guidance should be based on multiple intellegences and the vocational aptitude of young people. Parents should not hesitate to seek help when their children face difficulties in overcoming the barriers to learning and work. They have the ultimate responsibility for the well-being and development of their children and should pro-actively co-operate with school authorities and youth workers in tackling the issue of non-engaged youth (paragraphs 18-21 in Chapter V).

3.4 *Educators and Youth Workers*

Most non-engaged youth are not aware of their own strengths and vocational aptitudes. They need affirmation and guidance in their career development. Career guidance and vocational counseling should therefore be part of the education and training curricular. Educators and youth workers should work closely with parents. Services for non-engaged youth deserve high priority because of the potential risks such youth are facing. In view of increasing demands of non-engaged youth, youth workers need to reposition themselves and equip themselves to respond to the new challenge, particularly in the following areas:

- 3.4.1 Vocational counseling
- 3.4.2 Pre-employment training, espeically in areas of intrapersonal and interpersonal skills
- 3.4.3 Prevention of risk behaviours (drug abuse, juvenile gang activities

- and criminal offenses)
- 3.4.4 Rehabilitation of youth at risk
- 3.4.5 Working with at-risk families
- 3.4.6 Design and execution of outcome focused programmes, with tested outcome measures

Social Welfare Department is prepared to plan and coordinated training work to upgrade the knowledge and skills of youth workers to better equip them to undertake youth engagement work.

3.5 *Youth*

Every young person is ultimately responsible for his or her personal development and career development. In view of the knowledge-based economy, there is no shortcut to success. Each young person must be aware of his strength and vocational aptitude and receive appropriate, systemic training as the first step in his career development. Young people should be open to vocational training leading to new career paths of non-traditional industries. With Hong Kong's integration with the economies in Mainland China and overseas, mobility and cross-cultural ventures will be the direction to pursue. Participation in community services and contribution through volunteer work is a good way to equip oneself to tackle the challenges of a rapidly changing society.