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*Hong Kong youth
Opinion Letters*

Letters | Hong Kong must act to protect youth from digital overload

Letters

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Emotional support on offer on many levels

I refer to [your editorial](#), “Boosting suicide prevention must be part of Hong Kong’s recovery efforts” (July 21). The photo published with it is from the launching ceremony for The Samaritans’ Online Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training Course earlier this year, in response to the alarming rise in youth suicide cases.

Held in collaboration with the University of Hong Kong and with funding from the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, the course is designed to equip students, teachers and the public with the skills to identify early warning signs, provide immediate support and connect individuals to professional help.

The Samaritans have been involved in suicide prevention in Hong Kong for over 50 years and providing emotional support to those undergoing

emotional stress through our 24-hour multilingual hotline. Emotional support is also provided through email in English and Chinese to those who prefer to contact us via this platform.

Our Supporting the Aged Responsibly (STAR) team has been at the forefront of community outreach efforts focusing on the elderly and carers and providing them with practical tools to cope with life's challenges. As per Coroner's Court statistics, people aged 60 and above account for over [40 per cent of suicides](#) in Hong Kong yearly.

Our Ageing Well with Youth Intergenerational Programme funded by the Jockey Club Charities Trust has helped bridge the gap between generations, fostering understanding and mutual appreciation.

Through our mental health initiative in secondary schools, we train youth ambassadors, parents and teachers in suicide prevention. We have since expanded this programme to primary schools too, offering resilience training for students and specialised workshops for parents to help families navigate mental health challenges together.

Suicide prevention is an ongoing effort by all concerned. Larger community involvement is the need of the hour.

Ashok Bansal, board co-chairman, The Samaritans