

Mr Pig and Superman William: Ethics Education for Primary Pupils (Macao SAR)

Summary

The programme The Honest New Generation targets primary school children from grade four to six. Designed by the Commission Against corruption (CCAC) of Macao, its purpose is to encourage young people's awareness about the importance of integrity through activities like role-play and discussions. A special playground area called Paradise of Integrity has been set up for creative learning. Six months since its inception in January 2004, the CCAC has accommodated visits from 10,000 pupils.

Background

On 20th December 1999, Macao, a former Portuguese administered territory, was handed over to China and the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR), China was established. According to article 59 of Macao SAR Basic Law, the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) was established. The Commission functions independently and the Commissioner is accountable to the Chief Executive.



CCAC publications

With the belief that education is one of the best preventive measures against corruption, the Commission has launched various educational programmes with different targets, namely, civil servants, youth and the general public. The Commission put special emphasis on the education of youth, believing that the social value of honesty and integrity is best implanted in childhood. Thus, a series of education programmes has been developed with the objective of cultivating an honest 'new generation'. These include the publication of teaching materials (textbooks, CDs and a chess game), organising seminars to encourage integrity awareness of secondary students, and, inviting children to the Paradise of Integrity located at the branch office of the CCAC.

The project

"The flow of the program is smooth. With the simple language of the instructors, students manage to understand the importance of integrity."

Teacher, anonymous

When the Commission designed its first branch office in early 2003, one of its goals was to enhance the integrity-awareness of teenagers. A special Teenager Education Committee was created within the Community Relations Department inside the CCAC, to design and implement the programme. The Committee develops tools for both children and teenagers.

The Paradise of Integrity – an interactive playground

Besides providing information about the anti-graft work of Macao, the Commission aims to help children develop a set of positive social values through different activities. To meet this objective, an area called Paradise of Integrity inside the branch office was especially reserved for primary school children. In order to convey the message in an interesting and interactive way, the area was designed more like a playground than a solemn classroom to encourage children to feel comfortable and voice their opinion.

Believing that integrity education can be addressed in a more interesting way than by traditional 'preaching', the Committee decided that story-telling and interactive case discussion should comprise the core activity. By means of multi-media and interactive games, integrity related themes like honesty, courage to uphold justice and righteousness are conveyed to the young visitors.

The programme aims to transmit the following messages:

- Integrity and honesty are important social values that should be treasured.
- Corruption should not be tolerated and is harmful to everyone in society.

- Everyone, including youngsters, is capable of contributing to the establishment of a corruption-free society by being a responsible and honest individual.

The schools usually send their students by class. These are divided into groups of four to six primary students for the one hour guided tour and interactions. Since most children are curious to learn about the Commission, a visit at CCAC is attractive to them. The visit is facilitated by CCAC educational staff acting as activity leaders, puppeteers and tour guides in each activity.

The Paradise of Integrity is composed of three parts: the exhibition area, the interactive classroom (Lotus Village) and the wishing tree. Inside the exhibition area, there are computer games, a testimonial room, a viewer identification demonstration and models of past cases investigated by the Commission. Through a guided tour on these displays, children gain basic knowledge about the Commission's anti-corruption work in Macao.

The Lotus Village

Children visiting the Paradise of Integrity first arrive at the interactive classroom called Lotus Village. The name Lotus is specially chosen because Lotus not only symbolises integrity in Chinese culture, but it is also the flower of Macao SAR. By naming the activity room Lotus Village, children can associate the Lotus Village with Macao SAR.



Big Tooth, Superman William, Mr Pig and Clarina

The Commission has specially designed four main characters for the Lotus Village. Through the stories about the four characters (presented in a broad range of computer and puppet show, video, etc), the influence of corruption on society is discussed and elaborated: For instance, one computer show is about Mr Pig, a businessman, who had used stale flour to make bread, which caused many villagers to get ill. Big Tooth, a public hygienic inspector appointed to follow the case, had discovered the truth but was bribed by Mr Pig to keep it secret. More and more villagers suffered everyday, the government could not find out the reason. A schoolgirl named Clarina, by chance, found out that Mr Pig was bribing Big Tooth to cover up what he did. Finally she reported this case to the anti-graft Superman William. In the end, Mr Pig and Big Tooth were put into jail. At different intermissions of the story, instructors from the Commission discuss with the children about the behaviour of the four characters. The children are also invited to make a new ending on what happens if Clarina does not report the case to William, to further strengthen the message.

A puppet show

Different story-telling techniques including puppet and computer shows are shown based on the age of the children to make it more appealing to them. In one of the puppet shows encouraging honesty, the children are asked to discuss and finally make a decision for one of the characters: whether he/she will lie in exchange for the 'gifts' granted to them or whether he/she will insist to be honest. Finally, the instructor will explain to the children about the importance of righteousness and the consequence if he/she is dishonest. For children who are approaching the teenage years, the Commission has also produced short video clips on everyday ethical issues, enabling the teenaged audience to reflect on themselves more easily.

Before leaving the Lotus Village for the guided tour, each participant is given a fruit card. On this fruit card, children write their wishes and then hang the cards on the Wishing Tree located at the entrance of the Lotus Village. Children are quite serious about making their wishes. One wrote: "I want to be the Commissioner in the future" while another wrote: "I want to be a pilot but don't want to see any corrupted people on my plane".

Results and recommendations

Since the programme The Honest New Generation has been running between January and July 2004, over 10,000 students visited the Paradise of Integrity. Feedback from teachers is collected through questionnaires. After the visit, some schools ask their students to write a short essay about the visit. These

essays generally provide evidence that students have a positive impression and that they manage to grasp the message transmitted.

A factor impacting on the effectiveness of the programme is group size: a large class of 40 students can make discussions difficult. To solve this problem, the class is divided into different groups during the discussion session and the guided tour. For each group, the students elect their own group leader to present their discussion result. Practice shows that the smaller the group (four to five students in each group), the better the discussion result.

Finally, the Commission also benefited from the school programme since it conveys the most up to date information on the children's thoughts and ideas. This can serve as reference for educational tool development in the future and help to increase the transparency of the Commission, making it more approachable to the children and citizens in general.

Project description: Community Relations Department of the CCAC

For additional information, please contact:

Ms Athena Kong or Mr Hin Chi, Chan

Adress:

Community Relations Department
Commission Against Corruption of Macao SAR
14/F Dynasty Plaza Building
Alameda Dr. Carlos D'Assumpcao,
Macao (Via Hong Kong)
Email: SIKong@ccac.org.mo