

Press Release

SOSKELY running harm reduction outreach work at the Hong Kong Sevens for the seventh year

(Hong Kong, 6 April 2018) - 2018 is the seventh year that **KELY Support Group (KELY)** has been partnering with the Hong Kong Rugby Union (HKRU) to raise awareness of alcohol-related harm issues amongst local youth through the popular sports event of the 2018 Cathay Pacific/HSBC Hong Kong Sevens, which is kicked off today. SOSKELY is a harm reduction campaign that aims to reduce underage and binge drinking, minimise the immediate harm caused by binge drinking and intervene in cases of potential alcohol poisoning. We offer a safe, alcohol-free space, non-judgemental harm reduction information, and emotional support for young people on site.

“KELY has a strong presence in Hong Kong schools, and is a well-known and respected organisation in the youth community, and we share the same vision of helping our youngsters realise their potential, so I can think of no better group for us to be working with,” Robbie McRobbie, CEO of the Hong Kong Rugby Union, commented on the strong bond between KELY and the Rugby Union.

From 6 to 8 April, the SOSKELY team of KELY staff, supplemented by thirty volunteers, will be present inside the Hong Kong Stadium, reaching out to young people and encouraging them to stay hydrated, take care of their friends, and take breaks from time to time, so that they can fully enjoy the spectacular sporting event while being safe. (3 key harm reduction messages KELY promotes: “Water is your H2bro”, “Look after your squad”, “Know when to chill”)

Youth-friendly souvenirs with harm reduction messages will be distributed while event bags with our safety cards and festival essentials will also be available in order that young people can enjoy themselves and be prepared for chances that might involve alcohol. Engagement activities will be ready in SOSKELY’s alcohol-free chill out area for youth to pause and hang out if they need some rest.

This year, SOSKELY continues to promote the simple and effective Recovery Position message and hopes that young people spread our important harm reduction strategies among their peers. Putting someone in the recovery position will help keep their airway open and ensure that they won’t choke on vomit or liquid.

SOSKELY's main tent and chill-out area will be located at block 333 and 334 at the Upper West Concourse of the Hong Kong Stadium.

In 2017, SOSKELY continued to expand our outreach campaign, covering not only the Hong Kong Sevens but three other large music festivals in the city, giving out a record-breaking of more than 4,100L of water to young people as well as providing emotional support and a safe space, with the support of 103 passionate volunteers across different events.

“Teaching young people how to reduce the risks of drinking is a key component of our SOSKELY campaign. We recognise that we cannot control a young person's choice. However, providing them with the best tools and information so that they can make informed decisions for themselves and their peers are key elements in empowering them to choose to be safe and enjoy their time at the Sevens and any other places they may go,” stated Ms. Sky Siu, KELY’s Executive Director.

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About KELY Support Group

KELY Support Group (KELY) is a non-government funded bilingual organisation which provides support to youth between the ages of 14 and 24 in Hong Kong from Chinese-speaking, Ethnic Minority and English-speaking backgrounds.

Our mission is to empower young people to reach their full potential.

Our programmes and services range from resistance and harm reduction around drug and alcohol misuse to positive youth development for vulnerable and disadvantaged youth. With a priority to understand young people's perspectives, we equip them with key life skills and resilience as they face various challenges growing up in Hong Kong.

KELY's 3 Core Services:

- Prevention Education & Harm Reduction
- Positive Youth Development
- Advocacy

kely.org

About the Hong Kong Sevens

Established in 1976 and organised annually by the Hong Kong Rugby Union, the Hong Kong Sevens is the world's premier international sevens event, marking its 43rd year in 2018 (6-8 April). Since 1999, the Hong Kong Sevens has been a part of the HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series. The Hong Kong Rugby Union is the only international rugby union to have hosted two Rugby World Cup Sevens, in 1997 and 2005.

About HKRU

The Hong Kong Rugby Union (HKRU) was founded in 1952, and became an affiliated union of World Rugby in 1988. In 1968, the HKRU became a founding member of Asia Rugby and remains committed to the development of the game in Asia. The HKRU has hosted the world-famous Cathay Pacific/HSBC Hong Kong Sevens since 1976 and remains the only Union to have hosted two sevens World Cups in 1997 and 2005. In 2008, the HKRU hosted the first ever neutral venue Bledisloe Cup - hosting a second match in 2010. In 2013, the HKRU hosted the first British & Irish Lions match played in Asia and the following year hosted the first regional Olympic qualifier tournament for Rugby Sevens. The HKRU is a member of the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China and provides competitive and social rugby opportunities for men and women at every age and skill level, with a thriving community of over 10,000 players. To learn more please visit www.hkrugby.com, www.facebook.com/hkrugby and twitter.com/HongKongRugby.