Safer Internet Day: Child Online Safety Roundtable 2017
Situation in Hong Kong about Online Protection for children and Youth

Location: The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, DE402
Date: Tuesday, 7 Feb 2017
Time: 1pm – 5pm

Roundtable Summary

On Tuesday 7th February, Child Online Safety Roundtable 2017 was organized by eHelp, celebrating the Safer Internet Day together with over 100 countries globally with the theme 'Be the change: unite for a better internet'.

Ms. Christie Hoo, Chairman of YouthOnline Association and Co-founder of eHelp gave an open remarks and stated that the aim of the roundtable is to provide a platform for different stakeholders to share information on the work they have done for the online protection of children and young people from local, regional and global perspective. Meanwhile, the discussion was to raise awareness on disrupting the disseminations of Child Sexual Abusive Materials (CSAM) especially in Hong Kong.

Representatives from non-governmental organizations, governmental departments, the ICT industry, legal sector, academia, as well as child and youth groups were invited to join the roundtable. By further engaging related stakeholders in the discussion, eHelp hope to establish an online reporting mechanism in Hong Kong to help in the fight against CSAM and to ensure a better cyberspace for our next generation.

Ms. Claire Chen, the supervisor of the Child Online Safety Section, ECPAT Taiwan, talked about the reporting and consulting mechanisms in Taiwan. Claire mentioned the background of the organization and the operation of Internet reporting Hotline (web547) that handles illegal and harmful online materials. The Hotline has received 6360 reports in 2016, in which 488 reports were child sexual abuse content and cooperate with different stakeholders. On the other hand, they provided Web885 helpline service, which offers anonymous callers online counseling, including sexual harassment, sexual transaction, sextortion, received 229 enquiries in 2016 and the enquiries came from different platform such as facebook fan page, email, telephone.

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Claire ended her sharing by addressing the challenges that the hotlines are facing. For instance, Taskforce is lacked in Taiwan combating CSAM and the cooperation with law enforcement authorizes of the countries without hotlines is needed to be improved. Moreover, she added Taiwan lacks harmonized law on ICP/ISP's reporting responsibility and awareness and child protection policy among some internet/ social media companies.

The follow overseas sharing started with a brief introduction by **Ms. Bindu Sharma**, Asia Pacific Policy Director, International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (ICMEC), which aims at making the world safer for children by eradicating child abduction, sexual abuse and exploitation. ICMEC advocates, trains and collaborates to eradicate child abduction, sexual abuse and exploitation.

Bindu shared their work on ICMEC and the situation of online child sexual abuse and exploitation. According to current studies, there are 1 in 7 girls and 1 in 25 boys sexually abused in some way by age 18 and 750,000 pedophiles are online. She stressed rapid action from law enforcement authorizes (LEAs) to combat crime is needed.

Financial Coalition Against Child Pornography was also introduced in the session, the coalition was established in 2006 by NCMEC and ICMEC, which is an alliance of leading financial and internet companies working voluntarily to address commercial child pornography. They cooperated with the public, ISPs, law enforcement authorizes in countries around the world. In sight of the significant result of the financial coalition, Asia pacific financial coalition was established in 2009 by ICMEC in Singapore to disrupt the economics of the trade. Therefore, regional APAC-FCACP meetings were held regularly since 2013.

Bindu mentioned the challenges of against online child abduction, sexual abuse and exploitation. Raising awareness and enhancing international norms is a must for making the world safer for children. Bindu issued the law enforcement and industry involvement are the crucial part. She also talked about the research conducted by ICMEC.

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Mr. David Ng, coordinator of NetMission.Asia and co-founder of eHelp, shared the work on NetMission and situation of the child and youth online protection. NetMission is a youth network that recruit students in local tertiary institutes and universities every year, after trainings on Internet governance issues, the ambassadors will directly engage in the conferences for discussion such as ICANN meetings and United Nations Internet Governance Forum.

NetMission aims at train the trainers and spread the message of the importance of children and youth participation on internet governance issues. David added the online safety issue cannot be disregarded; they organized local and regional youth engagement and awareness raising events.

From the perspective of child related organization, **Ms. Shirley Wong**, Assistant Project Officer of Hong Kong Committee on Children's Rights and **Ms. Sarah Fang**, Member of Kids' Dream, started their presentation from stating the importance of balancing the freedom of speech and protect children to access to appropriate content online.

The current regional and local campaign #safeweb4kids was shared, that children from 7 regions participated in the regional consultation in Feb 2016, Children's Guide to online Safety in 8 different languages was launched afterwards, meanwhile, the participated children's groups produced short videos to promote online safety and distributed in public to raise the awareness on the issue.

Mr. Elvis Ng, the manager of Children and Youth Services, Hong Kong Family Welfare Society, introduced the background of Hong Kong Family Welfare Society and the existing situation of children and youth online protection in Hong Kong. Hong Kong Family Welfare Society aims to deliver quality and professional social services to enhance the well-being of families and individuals in Hong Kong in order to foster a caring community.

He noted online addiction is the most concern issue among parents. They organized different campaigns and activities to raise the awareness of online safety. He added they cooperate with the government and emphasized the importance of the proper use of internet.

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Elvis shared the cases about using the internet improperly and the consequences. He indicated provide support is imperative to those victims. He ended up the presentation by sharing resources on establishing a better internet.

Mr. Lento Yip, the chairman of the Hong Kong Internet Service Providers Association (HKISPA), said HKISPA established since 1996 and focus on promoting the development of Internet Industry. Lento mentioned the current online situation in Hong Kong and the mechanism on child online safety.

"Code of Practice: Practice Statement on Regulation of Obscene and Indecent Material" was set to provide advice for ISPs to follow. Not only advises content providers to put up warning, at the same time advises customers about parental guidance that supervision is needed for person age under 18. The code of practice also lists the actions to be taken by ISPs. If Class III material is found, they may disable access and suspend user account if continues the offence. If found Class II material without the required warning, the users will be asked to place the warning, suspend user account if continues offence.

Lento noted the interaction with Law enforcement agency may cause privacy issue, hence they are trying to strike a balance between information disclosures and online safety protection. To end, he explained areas of improvement and limitations of the current mechanism, including ISPs have no right to block access to content outside their network which requires the wide consent of the society and there is not enough publicity on the child online safety issue. Meanwhile, there is no clear ownership of the mechanism as the scope of the mechanism mostly fall on other's network. And last, incentive to various parties to expand the program or perfect the program is needed.

Mr. Nick Chan MH, Senior Solicitor & Council Member of the Law Society of Hong Kong, talked about the prevention of child pornography over the internet under Hong Kong laws. He mentioned the Control of Obscene and Indecent Articles Ordinance. Classifying an article as Class I to Class III, the Tribunal may impose conditions or restrictions relating to the publication of a Class II article whilst Class III articles are prohibited from being published. He introduced the prevention of child pornography ordinance. In the Ordinance, *""child" means a person under the age of 16; "child pornography" means the visual depiction that is a pornographic depiction of a person who is or is depicted as being a child, whether it is made*

or generated by electronic or any other means, whether or not it is a depiction of a real person and whether or not it has been modified". He mentioned any person who prints, makes, produces, reproduces copies, imports, exports or publishes any child pornography commits an offence and is liable.

However, it is a defence to a charge for defendant to establish such as (a) the possession was for a genuine educational, scientific or medical purpose; (b) served the public good; (c) that he had not seen the child pornography and did not know, nor suspect, the material is child pornography; (d) that he had not asked for any child pornography and, within a reasonable time after it came into his possession, he endeavoured to destroy it; or (e) that he believed that the person pornographically depicted in the child pornography was not a child when originally depicted and that the person was not depicted as a child.

Nick ended his sharing by concluding the limitations of the ordinance. He brought out the discussion point on whether the penalty is enough and if the age limit is suitable.

After the presentation sessions, **Ms. Elaine Cheng**, founder of DotKids Foundation and co-founder of eHelp facilitated the roundtable discussion. Participants discovered that there is lack of in-depth understanding of current situation, and service gap is existed on combating child sexual abuse materials online, that consensus was reached that the mechanism is needed to be established in order to handle the cases in related to CSAM in the cyberspace, meanwhile experience learning from overseas best practice and joint-force from different stakeholders are necessary for the battle to combat CSAM, as well as setting up information and knowledge sharing platform to enrich everyone's understanding on the issue, and to raise public awareness.

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