

Model School Program in Child Obesity Prevention through Physical Education in Asia: A Tale of Two Cities

Dr. Mei-Sin Tang
Principal
Baptist (Sha Tin Wai) Lui Ming Choi Primary School
HONG KONG-CHINA
E-mail: mstang@bstwlmc.edu.hk



Phua Kia Wang
Principal
North Vista Primary School
SINGAPORE
E-mail: phua_kia_wang@moe.gov.sg



Abstract: Physical education in the past four decades has undergone a transition from a profession with an emphasis on traditional sport skill acquisition to one with a broader emphasis on health related fitness and life long physical activity. World-wide, it is estimated that 155 million school age children and adolescents show symptoms of overweight and obesity (IOTF 2004). This presentation highlights a discussion of the connections between child and youth overweight and obesity and physical activity, diet, and physical education. Two school models of best practice – Baptist (Sha Tin Wai) Lui Ming Choi Primary School (Hong Kong-China) and the North Vista Primary School (Singapore) - will be highlighted as case studies that provide examples of innovative and integrative approaches to promoting life long health and wellness through physical education and health.

Dr. Mei-Sin Tang is one of the pivotal leaders in Hong Kong's education field. She has been the principal of Baptist Lui Ming Choi Primary School P.M. Session (currently named as Baptist STW Lui Ming Choi Primary School) since 1983, and School Supervisor of Oi Kwan Road Lui Kwok Pik Fung Kindergarten, an award winning school since 1994. She obtained her Doctorate degree in Primary School from the Chinese University of Hong Kong and has endeavored in reforming the primary school curriculum by contributing articles in local education journals and newspapers. Dr. Tang is also an avid supporter of fitness education. Her primary school is the first in Hong Kong to introduce the "thousand people dance" involving all the students and teachers in school to take part in fitness dances during recess. The school also pioneers in designing "dynamic recess" to motivate students to take part in sports, and "keep fit" programs to help overweight students exercise and reduce their BMI levels. Dr. Tang has also collaborated with Assoc. Dr. Carolyn Masterson from Montclair State University to conduct research and train her teachers to implement the CATCH program in her school.

Phua Kia Wang is a Principal of North Vista Primary School, a new school at the North-East of Singapore. Modeled after the Italian Reggio-Emilia approach to education, North Vista Primary School, is involving the communities around the school to help build the school of the future. Mr. Phua's first appointment as Principal was at MacPherson Primary School where he led the school in achieving various coveted National Sustained Achievement Awards in Aesthetics, Sports and Physical Fitness and also the Character Development Award. The school was nominated for the National Education Lee Kuan Yew Award, having obtained the Outstanding Development Award in National Education. In addition, the school was also awarded the People Developer Standard, the National Arts Council's Art Education Excellence Award and the Health Promotion Board's Cherish Gold Award. For his work in the education service, Mr. Phua was conferred the Public Administration Medal in 2007 by the President of the Republic of Singapore. This year, Mr. Phua has presented a paper at the International Conference on Redesigning Pedagogy at the National Institute of Education, Singapore on the Reggio-Inspired Curriculum at North Vista Primary School.