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Students' Life Under COVID-19

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COVID-19 pandemic has impact globally in macro and micro level. As school has been suspended for months and students were recommended to stay home as much as possible, their lifestyle especially on eating and physical activity has changed. Our team is interested on how's their life under COVID-19. Five primary schools and eleven secondary schools joined health interventions of our Centre have been selected and students in Primary 6 and Secondary 1 to 3 were invited to complete an online questionnaire on health habits and attitude. The data was collected for baseline in 2017/18 in primary school and 2018/19 in secondary school and follow up in 2019/20. A total of 385 and 1,102 valid questionnaires were collected from primary and secondary school students respectively. Findings showed that due to the lengthened home time during the pandemic, the proportion of P6 students who could achieve the amount of exercise recommended by the World Health Organization decreased from over 20% to 10%. In secondary school, the proportion of students engaged in 60 minutes moderate to vigorous exercise decreased from around 40% to under 30%; the proportion of students spending time on various types of electronic media (not for academic purpose) has increased with increased impact on concentration, emotion and back discomfort. Students also reported that more takeaway food has been consumed. However, result showed their awareness and practice on hygiene has been enhanced. We would see life is a lot different under COVID-19, but as Albert Einstein said, "in the middle of difficulty, lies opportunity", we will look forward to make wise move with the positive impacts on students while preparing for full resumption of school in-person lessons.

Keywords: eating habit, physical activity, COVID-19, students' wellness, Health Promoting School, school resumption

Biography:

Amelia Lo is Health Promotion Consultant / Health Promotion Officer i/c of Centre for Health Education and Health Promotion of CUHK. She has been involved in Health Promoting School (HPS) Movement in the past two decades in the Centre, developing HPS Performance Indicator and International Benchmarking System. She has extensive experience in advising schools to successfully build a healthy and safe school environment. She has been involved in conducting HPS capacity building workshop for educators and health professionals. Her research interests are HPS; emotional wellbeing; and child and adolescent health using different qualitative methods including photovoice, focus groups and interviews and quantitative methods.