

For immediate release

AIP Foundation launches new child helmet campaign National Photography Contest promotes traffic safety

Hanoi, 26 February 2009 – The AIP Foundation in co-operation with the National Traffic Safety Committee kicked off its Child Helmet Public Awareness Campaign with the announcement of its national traffic safety photography contest. The six-month campaign, running through 31 August, will have a three-pronged focus: to combat misinformation and convince parents that helmets are safe for children; to advocate for a modification of Vietnam’s current helmet law to include fines for drivers carrying unhelmeted children; and to increase child helmet-use rates nationwide, with a focus on urban areas.

“With 25 million registered motorbikes in Vietnam, traffic safety clearly remains a pressing issue,” said AIP Foundation President Greig Craft, “but the motivation is not yet there for putting helmets on kids. This campaign is necessary to ensure the societal and legal incentives are put in place to keep Vietnam’s youth safe on the hectic roads that are a daily reality for them.”

Minister of Transportation Ho Nghia Dung – Chairman of National Traffic Safety Committee said “Children are among the most vulnerable road users. Adults, especially parents, must teach children to comply with the helmet law by putting on helmets so that they can avoid a serious head injury should they be in a motorbike accident.”

Celebrity Goodwill Ambassador and singer My Linh and members of the Vietnam Helmet Wearing Coalition (VHWC), the sponsor of the Campaign, joined AIP Foundation to unveil the Campaign’s opening activity: a national photography competition entitled “Kids Love Helmets”. All Vietnamese nationals were invited to submit photos of children with helmets in daily life. “This contest creates awareness among adults that child helmet wearing leads to happy and healthy families. By putting helmets on my own children and endorsing this program, I wish to help make helmets more appealing to youth,” said My Linh.

“I hope parents will take this opportunity to talk to their children about safety. Parents can keep their children safe by giving them a good quality helmet, and also helping them to understand how to make safe decisions for themselves,” said Danish Ambassador to Vietnam Peter Lysholt Hansen, a VHWC member and major sponsor of the campaign. “All of us look to our parents to be role models, and by wearing helmets ourselves and encouraging our children to wear helmets, we will teach them safety behaviors that will last a lifetime.”

The top six submissions will be rewarded with monetary prizes worth 30 million VND and free helmets. The top 50 will be included in a public exhibition and used for upcoming advertising purposes of the campaign. The online newspaper and contest media sponsor, Tre Tho Information Service JSC. (WebTretho.com), will display campaign banners on its websites which directly link to the contest site. Signing up and photo submissions



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will be made through the contest sites at www.beyemubaohiem.com or www.webtretho.com/beyemubaohiem.

The new campaign comes on the heels of the first national public awareness campaign, which used multiple media to encourage youth compliance with new mandatory helmet laws. Similarly, the second campaign will use television commercials, print ads, public relations activities, parades, and helmet and educational material distribution at schools, along with the photography contest, to get its message out.

“Vietnam’s helmet law was enacted in December 2007, and the nation saw 1,500 fewer traffic fatalities the following year,” said Allaster Cox, the Australian Ambassador to Vietnam, VHWC member and campaign sponsor. “Through this campaign we hope to extend that type of meaningful benefit to the country’s last consistently unprotected riders – its children.”

AIP Foundation will complete final studies and reports assessing the campaign’s success within 90 days of its close. The campaign is supported by AusAID, the Danish Embassy, FIA Foundation, Safe Kids Worldwide, Talisman Vietnam, UNICEF Vietnam, the World Bank, and the World Health Organization (WHO).

About Asia Injury Prevention Foundation:

AIP Foundation is an American non-profit organization that aims to improve road safety in the developing world. AIP Foundation has donated more than 400,000 helmets through its *Helmets for Kids* program since 1999. AIP Foundation established Protec in 2002, the world’s only not-for-profit commercial helmet company that designed the revolutionary and low-cost ‘tropical’ helmet now produced in Vietnam. AIP Foundation also developed a national road safety curriculum in 2004, which has been recognized by the Department of Education and Training for traffic safety in all primary schools in Vietnam.

www.asiainjury.org

About the Vietnam Helmet Wearing Coalition:

The VHWC is a public-private partnership with the goal of increasing awareness of the importance of motorbike helmets in Vietnam. The VHWC was responsible for the highly successful National Helmet Wearing Campaign (2007-08) that contributed to the Government’s passage of a mandatory helmet law. Child helmet use continues to lag, though, and in response AIP Foundation is launching its second Child Helmet Wearing Public Awareness Campaign in January. The VHWC members supporting the Child Helmet Campaign include AIP Foundation, AusAID, the Danish Embassy, FIA Foundation, the National Traffic Safety Committee (NTSC), Safe Kids Worldwide, Talisman Vietnam, UNICEF Vietnam, the World Bank, and the World Health Organization (WHO). Parties interested in supporting the Child Helmet Wearing Public Awareness Campaign should contact AIP Foundation.

www.wear-a-helmet.com