



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WHEN A STAFF MEMBER IS INJURED, NGUYEN KHA TRAC PRIMARY SCHOOL TAKES ACTION

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After a staff member from Nguyen Kha Trac Primary School was injured in a motorcycle accident in early December, students and teachers eagerly received road safety assistance. Through the Asia Injury Prevention (AIP) Foundation's *Helmets for Kids* program, 1,139 helmets were donated to the school at a Helmet Handover Ceremony on December 27th. The Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) and the National Traffic Safety Committee (NTSC) collaborated closely on this project.

Nguyen Thi Thuy, a school staff member, was riding to school one morning on the back of her sister's motorcycle, when a large truck barely avoided crashing into them. Ms. Thuy's motorcycle swerved and she was thrown onto the pavement, her face colliding with the concrete. Thankfully, she wore a helmet and she did not suffer from any serious head injuries, though her face was visibly hurt.

While Ms. Thuy's helmet may have saved her life, only 15.5% of the students at Nguyen Kha Trac Primary school typically wear helmets, according to an observation conducted by AIP Foundation. This is particularly dangerous considering that 80% of the students' parents must take the highway when driving them to school, where trucks, cars, and motorcycles merge together at very high speeds.

"Every day, 30 people die on Vietnam's roads," said Mr. Than Van Thanh, Chief Secretariat of NTSC. "If a child from this school were in a situation similar to Ms. Thuy's but had not been wearing a helmet, the result could be deadly. The National Traffic Safety Committee hopes that by working directly with children, parents, and teachers, the numbers of road traffic casualties will decrease."

To combat the staggering number of child injuries and fatalities taking place on Vietnam's roads due to low child helmet compliance rates, AIP Foundation is implementing school based programs such as *Helmets for Kids* in primary schools. In this program, students receive free helmets as well as basic road safety education, and parents and teachers will be instructed on the importance of helmet use.

"Children are particularly vulnerable on the road, and their parents want to know how to protect them," said Mr. Duong Van Ba, Vice Director, Department of Student Affairs, MoET. "Through programs such as HFK, the government of Vietnam hopes to reach children and parents so that they are aware of the gravity of the situation, and know how best to deal with it. Helmets and road safety education are indispensable in Vietnam."

On December 27th, a ceremony was held to officially distribute the helmets to the students. Attendance was high among parents and government officials, including representatives from the MoET



and NTSC. Students performed a song and participated in a road safety fashion show, and were instructed on wearing their new helmets correctly.

Nguyen Kha Trac Primary School is one of three schools located in the Cau Giay district of Hanoi that will receive targeted social marketing activities as part of the first phase of a 3-year national campaign entitled “Children also need a helmet”. The helmet donation is being accompanied by widespread distribution of informational flyers that refute common myths surrounding child helmet use. In addition, a workshop was held in Hanoi to improve information sharing and encourage action among local road safety influencers.

Lotte Brondum, AIP Foundation’s Regional Development Director, explained the rationale behind the campaign, “Recent research reveals that child helmet wearing rates are very low, despite children being among the most vulnerable road users. As such, there is an urgent need to combat the myth that helmets can harm children, and to make non child helmet use socially unacceptable.”

The public awareness campaign was launched in November 2011 by NTSC, MoET, the National Traffic Police (C67), and AIP Foundation. Campaign activities will be accompanied by strengthened police enforcement supported by the World Health Organization (WHO).

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About AIP Foundation

The Asia Injury Prevention Foundation (AIP Foundation) is a U.S. registered 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization that uses public-private partnerships, public awareness education, and school-based programs to reduce the rate of traffic injuries and fatalities in developing countries. AIP Foundation has offices in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and Bangkok, Thailand. In 2001, AIP Foundation built its non-profit helmet assembly plant, V-SPEC, which manufactures Protec brand tropical helmets. These helmets offer an environmentally appropriate, safe and affordable option for motorbike and bicycle users.

In 2009, AIP Foundation, in collaboration with the FIA Foundation and the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility, launched the Global Helmet Vaccine Initiative (GHVI), an international coalition with the objective of “putting a helmet on every head in the ‘Decade of Action for Road Safety (2011-2020).”

For more information about the AIP Foundation, please visit www.asiainjury.org.



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