

PRESS RELEASE

Road safety program provides low-income and agricultural families with 5,600 helmets

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Helmets for Families, supported by Abbott, is expanding its road safety education to four new schools in the Hoc Mon District of Ho Chi Minh City, a suburban and agricultural zone where up to 90% of the participating students' parents are manual laborers. This year, *Helmets for Families* will continue its work toward increasing road safety literacy and safe behaviors amongst Vietnamese families by distributing more than 4,700 high quality helmets to students and teachers, and exchanging nearly 900 subsidized helmets to parents in Hoc Mon District and at two schools in Hanoi.

The program hosted its 2016-2017 school year kick-off event at Nhi Xuan Primary School in the Hoc Mon District. Nearly 1,000 students, teachers, and parents attended the ceremony. They were joined by representatives from Abbott, as well as officials from the Ho Chi Minh City Traffic Safety Committee, Department of Education and Training, Traffic Police, and local authorities.

“Students in the Hoc Mon District of our city are extremely vulnerable to road crashes because of the heavy industrial traffic in the neighboring Tan Phu Trung area,” Nguyen Minh, the Head of Student Affairs for the Ho Chi Minh City Department of Education and Training, said. “We hope that this program will continue to educate our citizens about the importance of wearing high quality helmets.”

A pre-project survey revealed that 76.3% of the students at program schools in Hoc Mon District commute to and from school by riding on their parents' motorcycles. The average student helmet-wearing rate at these schools is about 30%, well below the Ho Chi Minh City average of 48%. Only 1.3% of parents surveyed had the correct knowledge of what makes a high quality helmet.

AIP Foundation identified the new program schools based on parent survey data, the campuses' proximities to industrial zones, and a strong commitment from school administrators, among other criteria. From 2013 to 2016, *Helmets for Families* served schools in Ho Chi Minh City, Tra Vinh Province, and Hanoi, and donated 12,909 helmets to students and teachers.

“Due to a lack of education and awareness, so many students and parents don't know how important it is to wear a good helmet,” Mirjam Sidik, CEO of AIP Foundation, said. “Since 2013, *Helmets for Families* has raised helmet wearing rates at some project schools from as low as 9.5% to more than 80%. I am confident that through continued collaboration we can champion even more positive changes.”

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About AIP Foundation

AIP Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing road injuries and fatalities in low- and middle-income countries. Since 1999, AIP Foundation has been delivering effective road safety programs in locations across Asia and Africa. To find out more, visit www.aip-foundation.org or connect with us on Twitter @AIPFoundation.

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