

PRESS RELEASE

Event draws 2,000 supporters in advocating helmets become part of school uniforms

29 May, 2016 – Bangkok, Thailand

AIP Foundation, in collaboration with The UPS Foundation and Save the Children and with support from Vespiario Thailand Ltd., the Tesco Lotus and BIG Trees Project, and the Bangkok Bicycle Campaign, held an event, “A helmet for life”, to raise awareness of *The 7% Project*, which aims to address the consistently low rates of helmet use among children in Thailand. The event also introduced the policy goal of making motorcycle helmets a mandatory part of official school uniforms.

Held at Children’s Discovery Museum Bangkok, “A helmet for life” was attended by Mr. Supat Champathong, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education, and the Chairperson of AIP Foundation Thailand, Ms. Ratanawadee H. Winther; renowned Thai artists Chalit Nakpawan and Jeep Kongdechakul; the personalities behind leading parenting sites and blogs such as www.2madames.com, www.momypedia.com, and www.thelovelyair.com; representatives from the Vespa Classic Network and the television show “Sheeva Classic”; teachers, students, and parents from several schools involved in *The 7% Project*; and the general public.

The occasion marked a time to highlight successes of *The 7% Project* while urging the community to support the goal of improved safety on Thailand’s roads with the help of influential figures from the country’s art, entertainment, and internet spheres. Among these successes was an increase in helmet use by nearly 20% among pilot schools in the past year.

“Each year, countless children die in road crashes, but the number and severity of these incidents could be greatly reduced through increased helmet use. The Ministry of Education supports AIP Foundation’s campaign and will take *The 7% project’s* materials as templates for improving both the teaching and learning standards for road safety in Thailand,” said Mr. Supat Champathong, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education.

“Each day over 1.3 million children travel as passengers on motorcycles, but only 7% wear helmets – even though it’s the law. What is more, Thailand has the second deadliest roads in the world according to the World Health Organization. Road safety is such a pressing issue, yet so few children are being protected. Events like this that raise awareness in a spirited and lively way are one small step towards remedying this situation,” said Ratanawadee H. Winther, Chairperson of AIP Foundation Thailand.

“When people join together in a fun atmosphere while also getting access to crucial knowledge about their personal safety and the safety of their communities, great things can happen. I didn’t appreciate the gravity of the crisis that Thailand is facing on its roads before, but I have learned so much through this event,” said Chalit Nakpawan, one of the Thai artists in attendance.

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About The 7% Project

In response to the road crash crisis in Thailand, AIP Foundation and Save the Children in Thailand launched a nationwide campaign – *The 7% Project* – to decrease motorcycle death and injury among Thai children by increasing helmet use. It features an integrated approach focusing on enforcement, education, effective media campaigns, and innovation. All of these components will be supported by a new cross-cutting “Behavior Influence” methodology to ensure that all programming leads to actual, positive behavior change. In its first year, the campaign’s focus is to create an integrated grassroots and mass-media program to mobilize decision makers to integrate motorcycle helmets into the school uniform in Thailand. As the campaign matures, *The 7% Project* will expand beyond schools in an effort to increase motorcycle passenger helmet-wearing rates among children to 60% by 2017.

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.

Media Contact

Ms. Oratai Junsuwanarak, AIP Foundation Thailand Country Manager
2 Prima Sathon Building Room 8302, Naradhiwas Rajanagarinda Road, Yannawa, Sathon, Bangkok 10120, Thailand
Tel: (66-2) 676 0274, (66-81) 454 9054; Email: oratai.j@aipf-thailand.org