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PRESS RELEASE

***Helmets for Kids* expands to serving ethnic minority children in Vietnam**

24 October, 2016 – Gia Lai Province, Vietnam

To increase helmet use rates of children within the provinces of Dong Nai, Gia Lai, and Quang Nam, AIP Foundation, supported by Johnson & Johnson, will provide 21 primary schools in these provinces with 5,300 high quality helmets and road safety education under the *Helmets for Kids* program throughout the current school year.

Today, members of the Gia Lai Province, which has a high population of ethnic minority groups, joined local community members and student representatives from six of the project schools to kick off the *Helmets for Kids* program. The program will continue throughout the school year.

Government representatives and distinguished guests attended the event, including Mr. Tran Huu Minh, Deputy Chief of the Secretariat of the National Traffic Safety Committee; Mr. Duong Van Ba, Deputy Director of the Student Affairs Department of the Ministry of Education and Training; Ms. Sandra Shibukawa Lee, Director of Worldwide Fleet Safety for Johnson & Johnson; Mr. Gabriel Kardos, Fleet Safety Manager for Johnson & Johnson in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa; leaders from Johnson & Johnson Vietnam; and Ms. Mirjam Sidik, CEO of AIP Foundation. The Gia Lai Traffic Safety Committee, including representatives from Gia Lai's Department of Transportation, Department of Education and Training, Traffic Police, Women's Union, Farmer's Union, Chu Pah Bureau of Education and Training, Chu Pah People's Committee, and the Pleiku Youth Union, as well as members of the media, were also in attendance.

"We're thrilled to support the *Helmets for Kids* program in this often overlooked rural community," Jason Carroll, Managing Director of Johnson & Johnson Vietnam, said. "Road safety is imperative to all societies, and we are proud to instill road safety into their daily lives and help create long-term solutions for them."

"Vietnam has been a world leader in implementing a motorcycle helmet wearing policy, however the child helmet wearing rate is still low in some areas," Mr. Tran Huu Minh, Deputy Chief of the Secretariat of the National Traffic Safety Committee, said. "Children can be particularly vulnerable to death or injury during a road crash. Johnson & Johnson and AIP Foundation's work in Vietnam enhances our ability to build a better future for our country."

"The six schools for this year's program were chosen due to their high concentrations of low-income ethnic minority students, dangerous locations alongside major national highways, and generally low helmet use rates," a representative from the Department of Education and Training in Gia Lai said.

Program activities, including teacher trainings, occurred in May of this year in the three project provinces. Some participating schools have helmet use rates as low as 14.9%, and are located in busy areas near markets and major roads. Over the past five years, Johnson & Johnson has donated more than 45,000 helmets to children through the *Helmets for Kids* program.

"Educating kids about road safety is critical because road crashes are the second leading cause of death among Vietnamese children ages 5 to 14," Mirjam Sidik, CEO of AIP Foundation, said. "With these sobering statistics in mind, we are all the more pleased to embark on our fifth year working with Johnson & Johnson on this key program."

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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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