

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **AIP Foundation and Abbott hold the first *Helmets for Families* event – School parents can now exchange their low quality helmets with standard helmets**

*23 April, 2014 – Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam*

Asia Injury Prevention (AIP) Foundation and Abbott, publically commenced the new road safety education program, *Helmets for Families*, built on the proven school-based program, *Helmets for Kids*, with a ceremony at Cau Xang Primary School in Binh Chanh District on April 23. Developed in cooperation with the National Traffic Safety Committee and Ministry of Education and Training, this *Helmets for Families* project pilots the first of four selected primary schools in Ho Chi Minh City.

*Helmets for Families* tops off the success of the *Helmets for Kids* program by adding a new component focusing on parents, with the aim to change parent behavior about standard helmets. By signing the petition to ensure their children wear standard helmets and joining information sessions on the importance of using standard helmets, how to choose a standard helmet correctly and how to keep helmets in good condition, parents were able to exchange their low quality helmets with subsidized standard helmets.

Though this program, the National Traffic Safety Committee, the Ministry of Education and Training, AIP Foundation and the sponsor - Abbott aim to change parents' attitudes on the importance of standard helmets. "Most parents pay very little attention to the quality of the helmet. In many areas of Vietnam, low quality helmets are still commonly used, providing no protection for the users head if a crash were to happen," said Mr Nguyen Trong Thai, Chief of the National Traffic Safety Committee. "We appreciate the efforts of our stakeholders and the practical and effective contribution of donors, to highlight the standard helmet issues. The National Traffic Safety Committee urges the media to be active in expressing this message to help raise awareness and guide the behavior change to using standard helmets every day, reducing the consequences of road traffic crashes."

Ms. Mirjam Sidik, CEO of AIP Foundation said, "Exchanging low quality helmets with standard helmets will allow parents to be a good example for their children and increase the use rate of standard helmets for both adults and children. We urge parents to insist their children wear standard helmets and avoid any regret if a motorcycle crash were to happen."

"I believe that the new *Helmets for Families* program with its practical activities to involve parents, will motivate and inspire parents to be conscious of the risks around low quality helmets, improving the project school's standard helmet wearing rates." Mrs. Tran Thi Kim Thanh, Vice Director of the Ministry of Education and Training commented.



Mr Nguyen Van Dau parent of a Cau Xang Primary School student said, "This project is very important for families. I attended the information session for parents at the school and gained a lot of useful knowledge about purchasing, storing, and wearing a helmet correctly to ensure effective protection for my head. I registered to exchange a thirty thousand low quality helmet for a standard helmet from the program and I will definitely ensure my children wear standard helmets. My youngest son is a student of this school and was given a standard helmet, for my oldest child who does not attend this school, I will be sure to buy her a standard helmet. I will then be confident that my entire family is fully protected on our dangerous roads."

Exchanging low quality helmets with standard helmets is one of the main components of the *Helmets for Families* program. In parallel to offering parents subsidized helmets, Abbott has donated a total of 4,527 helmets for students and teachers, held an orientation workshop for stakeholders, organized training sessions for teachers, parents, and students, and distributed informative giveaways with useful messages reminding parents that their children should wear standard helmets every day. Additionally, extracurricular activities for students will be organized at four project primary school throughout May.

The ceremony was attended by representatives from the National Traffic Safety Committee, Ministry of Education and Training, Ho Chi Minh City Traffic Safety Committee, Department of Education, Traffic Police, and local authorities, Abbott volunteers, and 1,500 students, parents, and teachers from Cau Xang Primary School.

Cau Xang Primary School, one of four schools participating in *Helmets for Families* in the 2013-2014 school year, is located on Provincial Highway 10, a high-risk traffic zone where the traffic is dense due to many large trucks. Every school day, 85 percent of students commute to school by motorcycle and only 35 percent of those children wear helmets which are most likely of substandard quality.

### **About Abbott**

Abbott is a global healthcare company devoted to improving life through the development of products and technologies that span the breadth of healthcare. With a portfolio of leading, science-based offerings in diagnostics, medical devices, nutritionals and branded generic pharmaceuticals, Abbott serves people in more than 150 countries and employs approximately 69,000 people.

In Vietnam, Abbott has approximately 3,400 employees working in logistics, sales and marketing. Primary locations in Vietnam are in Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi and six other regions covering 63 provinces and cities across the country.

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### **About AIP Foundation**

The Asia Injury Prevention (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, Bangkok, Thailand, and Chengdu, China.

In 2001, AIP Foundation built its non-profit helmet factory, Protec, which manufactures “tropical” helmets. These helmets are climate appropriate, safe and an affordable solution for motorcycle and bicycle users. A socially conscious organization, the factory employs the physically disabled and reinvests all profits to AIP Foundation’s road safety programs.

In 2009, AIP Foundation, in collaboration with the FIA Foundation and the World Bank, 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).”

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