



The Hong Kong Psychological Society Ltd.

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## **The Hong Kong Psychological Society Urges Attention to Public Mental Health**

### **Following Tai Po Wang Fuk Court Level-5 Fire**

The Hong Kong Psychological Society (the Society) expresses its deepest condolences for the tragic Level-5 fire that occurred yesterday (26 November 2025) at Wang Fuk Court, Tai Po, which resulted in multiple injuries and deaths. We extend our heartfelt sympathies to the affected families and the injured. In this disaster, many residents have lost loved ones or their homes, and their lives have been severely disrupted, leaving them feeling grief and anxious. Our professional psychologists will do their utmost in various capacities to provide appropriate support to those affected and help them get through this difficult time.

The Society is also concerned that live broadcasts and the circulation of disaster footage by media or people may cause secondary psychological trauma. We urge everybody to recognise the impact of such events on mental health. The severity of this fire and the immediate sharing of images have exposed many citizens to the disaster. We remind the public that repeated exposures to such images can trigger secondary trauma, particularly among disaster survivors, witnesses, and individuals with prior traumatic experiences, potentially worsening their emotional distress.

Common emotional reactions after a disaster include:

- Shock, numbness, or disbelief
- Anxiety, worry, or fear
- Sadness, helplessness, or tearfulness
- Sleeplessness or changes in appetite
- Difficulty concentrating
- Intrusive thoughts or unwanted memories about the event

These are natural responses to trauma and typically ease within days or weeks. If symptoms persist and the following signs of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) affect daily living, professional help is recommended:

- Intrusive or unwanted memories, nightmares, or flashbacks
- Avoidance: fearful of thoughts, feelings, or places related to the trauma.
- Disturbances in mood: Ongoing sadness, worries, fear, loss of interest, social withdrawal.
- Hyperarousal: Easily frightened, sensitive to related images, restlessness, sleeplessness, or poor concentration.

The Society advises the public to limit exposure to related news coverage and take care of their emotions. We also call on media organisations to consider avoiding excessive repetition of disaster footage, and include mental health messages in their reports. Parents should guide children with compassion when viewing news and pay attention to their emotional needs.

We emphasise that strong emotional reactions after a disaster are normal. People should accept their own and others' feelings. If symptoms persist for more than a month and interfere with daily life, professional assistance should be sought. All sectors of society should work together to provide a supportive, understanding and compassionate environment for those affected, helping them gradually return to normal daily living.

**If citizens need emotional support, they can call the following hotlines:**

**[Emotional Support Hotlines]**

- Shall We Talk Hotline: **5164 5040**
- Shall We Talk "Mood Call" Mental Health Support Hotline: **18111**
- Open "Up" (WhatsApp / SMS): **9101 2012**
- Social Welfare Department Hotline: **2343 2255**
- The Samaritans (Suicide Prevention): **2389 2222**
- The Samaritans (Multilingual): **2896 0000**
- Suicide Prevention Services (life hotline): **2382 0000**
- Caritas Family Crisis Support Hotline: **18288**
- Hospital Authority Mental Health Hotline: **2466 7350**

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