

**Age-friendly Cities with Cooperation & Participation –
The Asian Pacific Perspective Regional Conference**

*Application of
“Age Friendly in Outdoor
Spaces through Participation”
in Hong Kong*

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November, 2010

Introduction

- Before 2008, there was no action response to “Age-friendly City” in Hong Kong.
- In realization of the concept of “Global Age-friendly Cities” two projects of “Age Friendly Outdoor Spaces” were implemented at two districts in Hong Kong by Caritas Services for the Elderly from February 2008 onwards

Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide

(published by WHO at 2007)

Figure 6. Age-friendly city topic areas



**Outdoor
spaces and
buildings**

Project Details

- Totally 40 members joined two separate groups at the two districts. Elders mainly concerned the features of outdoor spaces such as environment, green spaces, outdoor seating, pavements, safety and public toilets.

District	Organized by	Number of members	Topic
Tin Shui Wai (a new town)	1 elderly centre	26	Outdoor Spaces
Tung Tau (an old urban district)	1 elderly centre	14	Public Toilets

Project Details (Con't.....)

- Phase 1 : Education / training
- Phase 2 : Exploration of Elders' Need
- Phase 3 : Action Follow
- Phase 4 : Reflection and Promotion

Age-friendly Group



↓ Tung Tau

↑ Tin Shui Wai



Aims

- Enhancing the knowledge, attitude and behavior of elders
- The practical experience applying “Participation” and “Empowerment” in the context of elderly service has been found to be encouraging and fruitful to both the elderly and workers



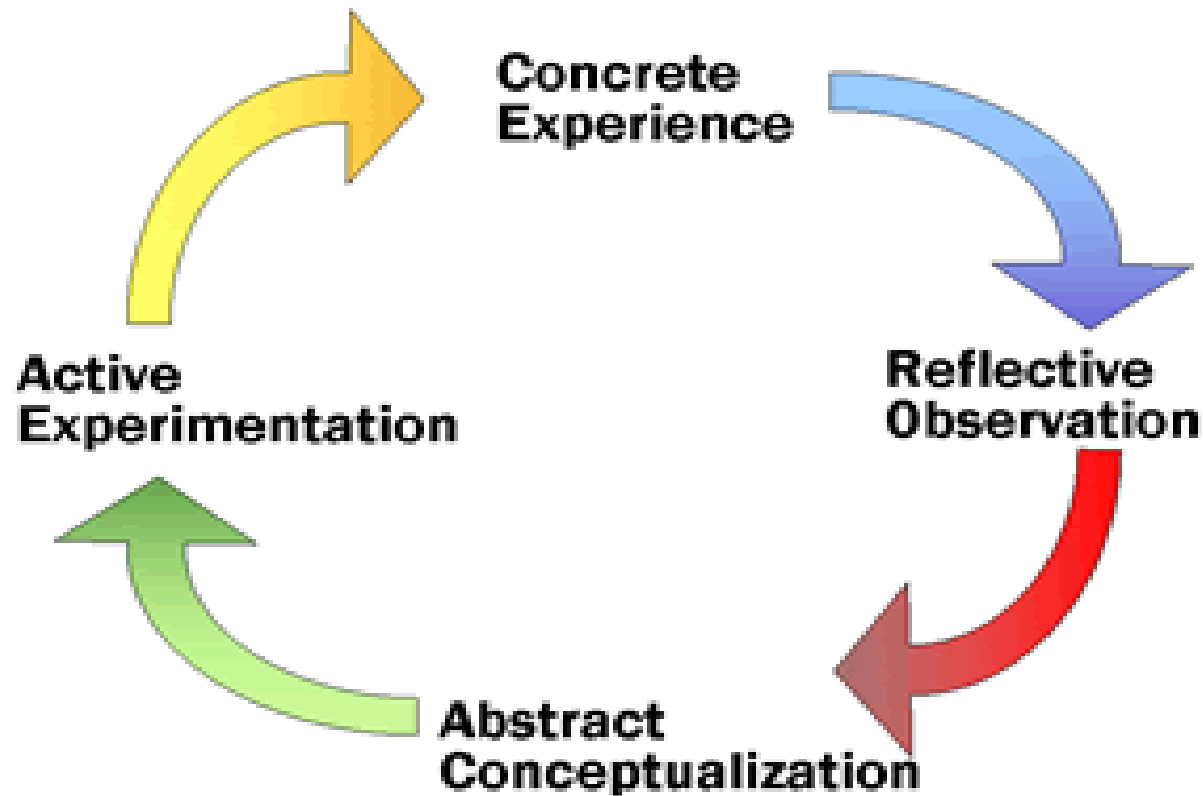
Theory and Strategies on the promotion of Age-friendly Community

- Experiential Learning
- Empowerment strategies
- Community-based Intervention

Experiential Learning (Kolb, 1984)

- Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, 1984) defines experiential learning as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience."

Experiential Learning Theory



**Kolb's Cycle
of Experiential Learning**

image by Karin Kirk

Empowerment Strategies

- From Elders' perspective
- Full participation of the elders
- Focus on Strength Perspective
- Enhance Elders' Conscious raising
- Advocate the government to adopt the guidelines and use it in the related department which provide services and facilities for the elders

Community-based Intervention

- focuses on a community's need, deficiencies and problems.
- focuses on discover of community's capacities and assets in order to shift the problem to asset focused, local community people are required to commit in investing themselves and their resources in the efforts.
- And valuable outsides assistance can be provided to the community that is actively developing their own assets.
- By doing so, the regenerating community can begin to assemble its strengths into new combinations.



Contents of Phase One

Education / Training via *experiential Learning and activities*

- Acknowledge the concept of age-friendly
- Arrange community walks / visits



Ice breaking excises



Education session at public forum



Choose and discuss the topic



Study workshop at university

Site visit



Contents of Phase Two

- Exploration of Elders' Need
 - Identify problems
 - Form focus group
 - Prepare survey and design questionnaire
 - Discuss guidelines base on elder's needs
- Survey on the public's opinions on Age-friendly Outdoor spaces
 - Questionnaire finished: 1178 (*Tin Shui Wai*)
 - Checklist : 5 Public toilets under Food and Environmental Hygiene Department in WTS (Tung Tau)



Focus
group



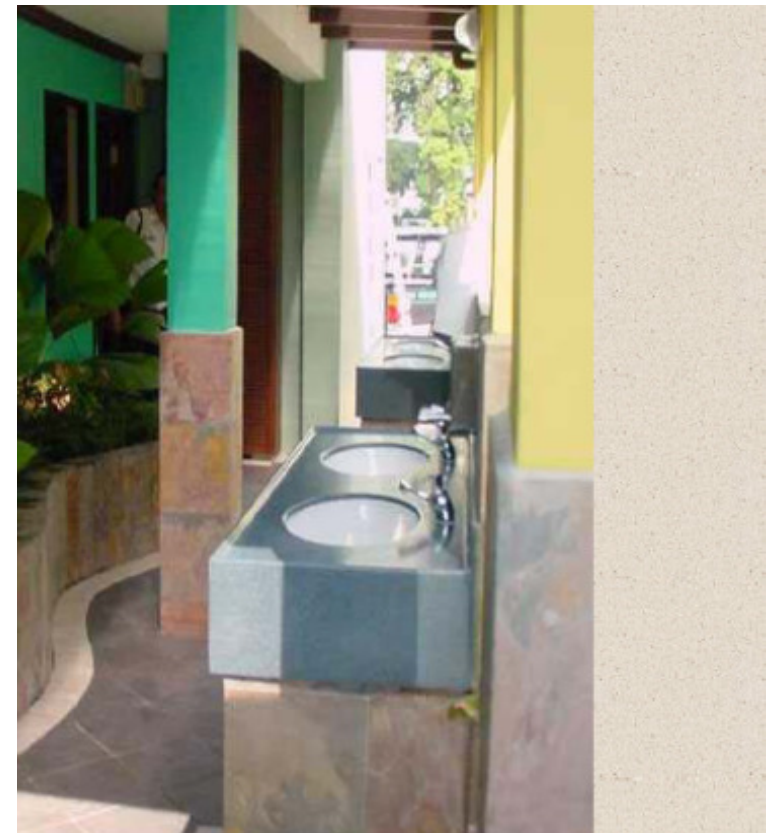
Preparation for Survey



Survey in two Districts

The Age-friendly Guidelines on

- Outdoor Spaces – Park and Public Toilets
- which are suggested by our elders member in the focus group



A. Park Facilities

1. Spacious.
2. Non-slip walkways.
3. Enough wooded area.
4. Enough chess desks.
5. Outdoor seating is available and well-maintained with shelter, allow the elderly stay in the park even at bad weather.
6. Suitable and comfortable seating around flower bed and green spaces.
7. Special exercise area for elders with sufficient and safety facilities.
8. Exercise facility with clear user guides (details, with diagram and large text).
9. Enough space provided for play particular exercise (e.g. Tai Chi).
10. Water purifier was installed to ensure drinking water can provide.

B. Roads and Safety Facilities

1. Non-slip road, with adequate safety handrails.
2. All pavements are wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs to use the park.
3. Stairs with yellow warning strips and wide, slopes are prioritize instead of stairs.
4. Enough lights to ensure safe access by all.
5. There are separate cycle paths for cyclists.

C. Public Toilets

1. Provided, located close to the park and easy access.
2. Non-slip, clean and dry flooring.
3. Equipped with one-piece toilet, handrails and safe alarm.
4. Wide enough to accommodate wheelchair to cross.

A Guide to Age-friendly Public Toilet Design

1. Well ventilated
2. Non-slip, clean and dry floor
3. Handicap friendly for toilet
4. Sit-based design toilet should be dominant and supplement with went-based design toilets.
5. Well-designed lighting system
6. Fitted with an automatic flushing device
7. Coat hooks should be affixed behind doors.
8. All wash basin with electronically and sensor controlled taps can be considered. 2 or more basins, one should be installed at child's height.
9. Liquid soap dispensers, paper towel dispenser or hand dryer and litter bins should be installed
10. Message Design should be simple, uncluttered, attractive and eye-catching.

Contents of Phase Three

- Community Walk with District Councilors
 - Arouse their awareness and obtain their identification
- Press conference to release the survey findings
 - Arouse the public's concern
 - Conduct community education





Contents of Phase Four

- Follow up Action
 - Walk around the community regularly
 - Meeting with District Council members and Government Officials
 - Advocate the government to adopt the guidelines
- Promotion and Education
 - Sharing session at elderly centers, community organizations, District Council members etc.



Outcome

- The application on the concept of “Age-friendly Environment” is proven to be effective.
- Elders can enhance the knowledge, change the attitude and behavior of elderly in a significant way.
- Two focus group were formed to follow the further concern, most of them would explain the concept of “Age-friendly Outdoor Space” to their friends and families.
- Several education sessions among elders and in the community were held, survey conducted, press conference, sharing with community leaders were organized and with about 800 people involved.
- Suggested guidelines were raised by our elders and to be constructive in way.

Outcome

- This practical experience applying “Empowerment” in the context of elderly service has been found to be encouraging and fruitful to both the elderly and workers.
- enriches us to learn from other experts in the field - our clients or "partners“ through their participation
- They knew that their voices can facilitate the community and policy make changes. Elders become more actively to share their views and opinions.
- Members became more sensitive about the community and have their ideas of the construction of the community, and so become from passive to active mode, empowers elder individuals with a positive self-image.

Outcome

- It is effective in strengthening older adults' contact with the community, enhance more mutual support from the community, protecting older adult rights and increasing their capacity to influence policy-making.
- We can see that a community never lack of resources, it just depends on what way for us to explore and transform the existing based strengths to be the alternatives for the community.
- Also allow us to promote a search for maximum autonomy with maximum community.

Conclusions

Our practice can :

- facilitate elders to help community to promote and become a democratic and pluralistic society including distributive equality, respect for dignity of individual;
- its also ensures and maintains good quality of living environment towards an age friendly city



Thank You!

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