

14 December 2018

### E-Sports: Social Responsibility for Child Health

The wellbeing of children is the key to strengthening development of children in each of their ages. The components of child development are the physical, mind, emotion, intelligence and social orientation. If children spend too much time, more than is needed, to play with the intent to win in video games contests and gain prizes, or engaging in what is called e-sports, and if they play games without knowing that it might affect them negatively, if they play under the dominating influence of uncontrolled advertising and if they are competing in contests lacking controls aimed specifically to protect them. Then, it is the responsibility of all sectors of society to work together in formulating rules and regulations, or codes of conduct covering the organization of e-sport events, and also work to create understanding so that communication about e-sports is done correctly, and complete in every dimension. Concerned society should also forge understanding and insight on e-sports with the aim of building up capability and efficiency to deal with the problem.

The eleventh National Health Assembly,  
Having considered the report on E-Sports :Social Responsibility for Child,<sup>1</sup>

*Acknowledging* that the e-sports concept is that of an online video gaming contest with the aim being to gain prizes. This is a new phenomenon having rapidly grown in popularity among children and youth both in Thailand and abroad, with billions of players and watchers globally,

*Realizing* that the Sports Authority of Thailand with the signed confirmation of the Minister of Tourism and Sports has affirmed that e-sports is a sport and has accorded recognition to the Thai E-Sports Association as a sports association and has given it the title: Thailand E-Sports Federation, in 2017 and that this in effect communicates to society that e-sports is a sport. It has thus given rise to varied opinions and widespread debates on the question whether in fact e-sport activities result in stronger mental and physical health or not, as well as on the question of its good and bad effects on the society as a whole, and in what manner,

*Worried* that business operators in Thailand have been organizing widespread competition in e-sports at all levels of society i e at school, community, country, and regional levels, resulting in communication with an advertising orientation in many forms openly directed to children in many forms and without control,

*Worried and concerned* that in most e-sports game contests there is a hidden element of gambling, such as betting to predict the winner and there are many forms of exchanges of a variety of objects within the game structure, this being widespread in such gaming communities leading to fomenting the social value of acceptance of gambling as normal, that as a result children enter the gambling network easily because it is close at hand, and have little or no

<sup>1</sup> NHA 11/Main 3

interaction with people around them, and that it is difficult for concerned agencies to supervise and control gambling in this form,

*Acknowledging* that there is clear evidence that Thai children are engaging increasingly in sedentary behaviors, that existing information reveals that children and youth are sitting glued to monitor screens, more so on average than other social groups, and that such trend is increasing with a result that Thai children are lacking in physical activity, leading to health problems, especially on a trend towards obesity which is a key cause of chronic non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressure,

*Anxious* that apart from physical health problems, there is also medical evidence confirming that children when they go into e-sports without proper understanding or practicing games continuously for many hours on end may be addicted to gaming and violence and may be prone to lacking critical thinking and self-control, leading to aggressive behavior, reduced efficiency in memory and intelligence during school age, and possibly deficient in mental health in the long run, which may lead to other social problems as well,

*Realizing* that knowledge and understanding of e-sports by children and family as well as the ability to manage themselves on this activity are still important problems, as information on agenda, issues, perspectives and news sources is controlled by only a few groups, and that factual presentation on e-sports is not comprehensive enough, lacking coverage on all the dimensions,

*Viewing* that the child's well-being, covering are growth, development, and learning in all physical, psychological, emotional, intellectual and social dimensions, all interconnected to form a balanced system, should be given vigorous and efficient support and encouragement appropriate to their age, and that it is necessary that there should be forged a collective responsibility by all parties concerned in an effective manner so that e-sports do not have a negative impact on the wellbeing of children, in line with the concept of child protection in Child Protection Act B.E. 2546 (2003) and Convention on the Rights of the Child.

### **Has passed the following resolutions:**

1. Requesting the Thailand E-Sports Federation, together with the Sports Authority of Thailand, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Public Health, Royal Thai Police, Office of the Consumer Protection Board, community organization councils, local government organizations, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, Pattaya City, religious organizations, the Children and Youth Council of Thailand, members of National Health Assembly, business operators of e-sports, the people sector, and all concerned organizations in the society to collectively set guidelines for action, measures, and their implementation regarding activities on e-sports to ensure safety, fairness, and transparency in an open and comprehensive manner to protect children as into e-sports spectators and contestants,

With regard to educational institutions, requesting their education authorities and the Thailand E-Sports Federation to jointly develop rules and regulations governing e-sports contests and organization of marketing promotion activities of e-sports operators to ensure safe e-sports activities for child wellbeing;

2. Requesting that the Child Online Protection Action Thailand (COPAT), the Department of Children and Youth, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, together with the Ministry of Public Health, and the Thailand E-Sports Federation, to be lead agencies in working

with the Sports Authority of Thailand, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Royal Thai Police, the Department of Public Relations, Prime Minister's Office, the Office of the Consumer Protection Board, the Office of the National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT), the Thai Research Fund (TRF), the Thai Health Promotion Foundation, every parents and teachers association, media profession organizations of every type, the civil society, Community Organization Councils, the Children and Youth Council of Thailand, members of National Health Assembly, local government organizations, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, Pattaya City, children and youth networks concerned, the civil society sector, all concerned agencies in every sector to take the following action:

2.1 Undertake studies and research, seek data, and study impacts, using varied transparent methods and soliciting opinions by correct and appropriate methods from all sectors of society in order to find ways to communicate and foster correct awareness on e-sports acceptable to all, and communicate such data, facts, and knowledge in a correct, complete and balanced manner, inclusive of all relevant factors i.e. business, economic, technology, public health, medical, and social, showing both positive and negative aspects,

2.2 Develop media of all types for dissemination purposes and support the generation of sets of information, knowledge, action guidelines, and advice for parents, teachers, and the community on e-sports; present possible impacts on children in every dimension when they play, watch, and compete in e-sports; collectively set preventive, protective, and therapeutic measures to help children affected by e-sports in every dimension including monitoring, prevention, promotion and problem-solving; and develop the capacity of educational institutions at lower than tertiary level or equivalent, community ICT learning centers, game stores, family, community and agencies concerned; and involve local community in the planning of learning of e-sports in a correct and comprehensive manner through a process of learning how to use technology creatively, specifically for children and include it as a subject in the school curriculum;

3. Requesting the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security in conjunction with the Sports Authority of Thailand, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Public Health, the Office of the Broadcasting and Telecommunication Commission, the Royal Thai Police, the Office of the Consumer Protection Board, the Thai E-Sports Federation, the Children and Youth Council of Thailand, children and youth agencies concerned, local government organizations, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, Pattaya City, members of the National Health Assembly, Community Organization Councils, the people sector, and other agencies in all sectors to do the following: develop monitoring systems and mechanisms in a participatory manner to supervise, keep an eye on, receive complaints or implement relevant laws on activities that may violate rules and regulations of the Broadcasting and Telecommunication Commission, the consumer protection law, the child protection law, the law on gambling, the law supervising game stores, and other relevant laws;

4. Requesting the Sports Authority of Thailand and the Ministry of Tourism and Sports in conjunction with the Ministry of Digital for Economy and Society the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Education, Community Organization Councils, the Office of the Consumer Protection Board, the Royal Thai Police, local government organizations, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, Pattaya City, the Children and Youth

Council of Thailand, the Thailand E-Sports Federation, members of the National Health Assembly, the civil society sector, the people sector, and agencies concerned in every sector to formulate specific laws leading to the creation of committees, mechanisms, and measures at every level to supervise and control online game business operations that have an impact on child wellbeing, organization of e-sports activities in every aspect, ranking of games in terms of the degree of violence, and other necessary measures to cope with rapid and widespread growth of such businesses and competitions, with the result that e-sports operations will be transparent, fair, accountable, safe and conducive to social responsibility for child wellbeing;

5. Requesting the Secretary-General of the National Health Commission to report the progress to the 12<sup>th</sup> National Health Assembly.