



# Migrant Children in Hong Kong

In Hong Kong, children born from domestic workers, refugees and other marginalized groups are forced to navigate a world of legal hurdles and social barriers. Targeted support and inclusive policies to ensure their well-being and successful integration into society are desperately needed.



**Leitner Center**  
for International Law  
and Justice



# Key concerns



1

## Legal and social status

Uncertain legal and social status make accessing health care and schools difficult, putting their health and future at risk.



2

## Inadequate education

Challenges in school, such as language barriers, religious-based discrimination and unwelcoming environments, which inhibit learning.



3

## Economic hardships

Living in families with limited access to a stable income leaves children in poor living conditions, including a lack of adequate food



4

## Social integration difficulties

Isolation and discrimination are common, impacting children's mental health and ability to integrate in Hong Kong society.



5

## Unlawful detention

Children can be detained due to their or their parents' immigration status, a practice that goes against global agreements protecting children's freedom and well-being.



## Jason's story

Jason\* arrived in Hong Kong from Vietnam with his family at age 12, seeking international protection. It was two years before he was accepted to attend secondary school. He was eligible for government subsidies for school fees, uniforms, textbooks and transportation, but these subsidies are paid several months after the start of the school year. This meant his mother had to borrow money to cover the costs and then seek reimbursement, which was very slow. Jason regularly missed part of his school day every two weeks when he went with his parents to report to the Immigration Department - a schedule he learned to live his around.

Despite the challenges he faced, Jason did very well in school. However, his future remained uncertain due to his lack of legal status.

\*Pseudonym used for protection reasons, source: [The Diplomat](#)

## Recommendations



**Fair treatment for  
all children**



**Help families in  
need**



**Do not detain  
children**



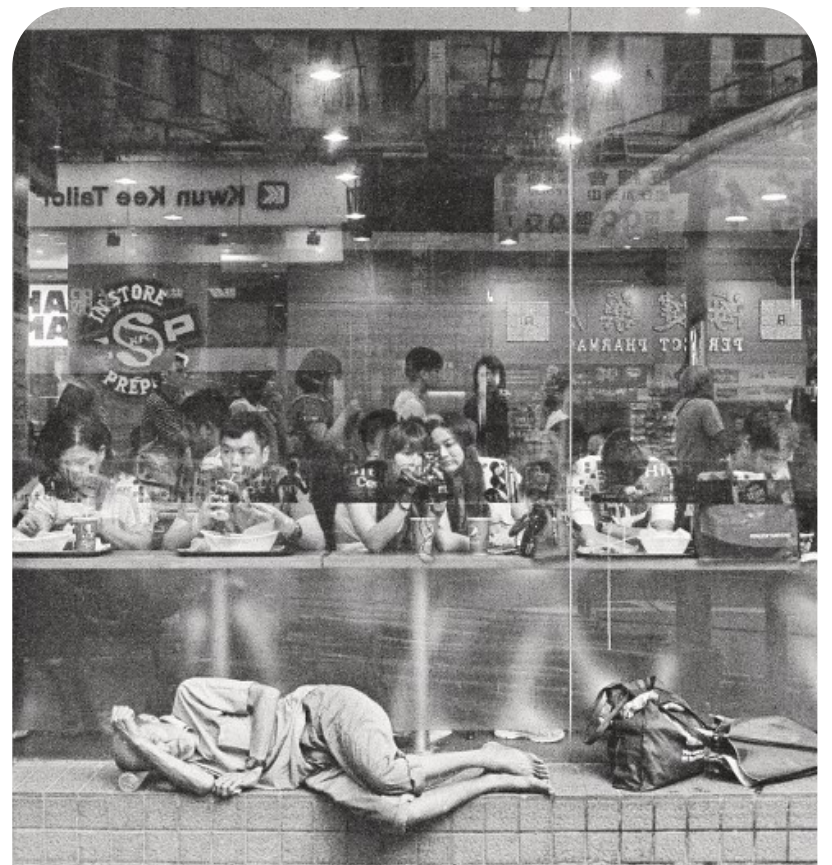
**Provide  
appropriate  
education**

# About the Leitner Center

This overview is based on a chapter from the Leitner Center's latest report "Unseen struggles: Addressing migrant rights in Hong Kong" and its submission to the UN's Universal Periodic Review. The Leitner Center for International Law and Justice at Fordham Law School trains law students to become international legal experts and impassioned human rights advocates through its pioneering human rights programs, clinics, and education initiatives; facilitates capacity building and advocacy with local social justice organizations and activists around the world; and contributes to critical research among scholars in international human rights.



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