

My name is Ty. I am a school uniform.

Before the Covid Wars, we uniforms detected that our kids were generally happy and enthusiastic when going to school. Our ties were tied neatly, and our shirts were buttoned properly every day. Thick jackets were put over us in winter, keeping both our kid and us warm and ready for a fun day at school.

But then Covid came along, and decided to strike a battle against all, despite race, age, living or not. Among them, us uniforms have taken a hard blow: we were the first ones to be retreated into our closets, onto steel racks, or hung indefinitely without a sentenced date behind bedroom doors.

Surely, we are furious! No one ever asked us about our views on this, whether it is the months of protests against Hong Kong Extradition Laws, or the Covid Wars that began immediately thereafter. It's like no one thinks we have any brain or feelings! They just announced school suspension and then, boom! We're out! No school, followed by rounds after rounds of online ZOOM lessons for our kids.

Instead of limiting kids' screen-time and waking kids up in the morning to quickly put us on for school, parents now wake their kids up to get in front of their computer screens, and it suddenly matters more than not getting us ironed, when their kids cannot get a prompt WI-FI connection.

Worse for this generation of uniforms in Hong Kong is that, we haven't even recovered from our previous suspension, due to almost a year-long of public protests! You see, months before Covid hits this world, kids in Hong Kong have already gone into online schooling due to political unrest, riots and streets blockades.

A month ago, the government urgently passed a law banning everyone from wearing masks in public because wearing a mask, especially a black one, indicates that you are likely a violent protestor, and will be prosecuted. Then shortly about a month later, they announced that people **must** wear a mask now, to protect themselves from Coronavirus, or else they will be prosecuted and fined. I hope the same would happen to our uniforms, who knows, in this day and age, our kids don't need to have us now, but tomorrow they just might resume school and need us again, right?

But one thing for sure at the moment is that, uniforms and kids are pulled away from the picture; on suspension for as long as this virus is around. Do

adults really think us uniforms and kids could just stop growing out of each other, and one's childhood and education can be held on suspension indefinitely?

Speaking of the colors of face masks, people are suddenly, so color-sensitive about what they have on rather than what they are within! I wonder if schools will start changing our colors and designs based on students' interests, from now on. Well, that would be exciting! Parties for the government are called blue, while those against are yellow. Honestly, it sounds very confusing. These are all ideas very difficult for any uniform to understand. I mean we might say we'd understand, and appear to be patient for our kids' sake, but we don't really want to understand, instead, we just want to go back to school before we don't fit our kid anymore, like our cousins, the school shoes.

My cousin, Penny "the loafer", a school shoe, had it much worse than us uniforms. Penny's landlord, a shoe rack, has forced her out of her home because she doesn't fit her owner's feet anymore. We all are the most afraid that the same might happen to us soon. Forced out of existence in the dumpsters or donated to the school's gym as spare clothes.

Our kids didn't have an easy time either. Due to the rising cases, the government has ordered for all schools in Hong Kong to split the kids' summer holidays into two! The first part of the summer takes place in March and April, then face-to-face classes will resume during June to August. After that, kids will have only about a week of summer holidays, that is, unbelievably, the second part of the summer, until they are due back at a glimpse for a new academic year at school again.

As for me, since my kid is currently in Primary Six, I only have a few months until I will retire. She will move onto secondary school, and will no longer be using me, after this absurdly "short" summer. Although my kid frowns on this odd arrangement, where there is hardly a summer holiday and there isn't any ceremony in place for her graduation, I will cherish the days that we have left together. "No day in sight; but today we fight!", I kept saying to myself.

Finally, the government announced last week, that we are able to resume face-to-face classes. The first week of school has commenced as expected, schools were transformed into battlefields, where the more hand sanitizers or alcohol wipes our kids have put into our pockets, the better equipped "soldiers" they are for the fight.

That isn't the only thing that we see has changed at school. We detected that our owners react distant to others, and are generally sensitive and worried all the time, about being infected at school.

Sometimes, I remember our glorious days before the war. We were always upbeat and filled with school pride, that the word "hope" was rarely thought of. But now, in our kids' current situation, they pray endlessly for it. Without a certain future, kids wonder if their lives would ever be the same again, and if their plans and dreams will ever be fulfilled.

We hope that what seems to be this "endless battle" will come to an end. We hope that every kid can return to their normal, cheerful lives again. We hope that Earth can revive its very own spirit.

We hope as uniforms, unanimously.