

Presidential Address

XXXXI National Conference of Indian Academy of Pediatrics, Chennai, January 8, 2004

First of all let me take this opportunity to personally thank each one of you for having elected me to the highest post in Indian Academy of Pediatrics. May I also take this opportunity to remember my teachers - late Dr. Sheila Singh Paul, Dr. Manorama Verma, Dr. Elsie Philip and many others, who have given their best for making me what I am today professionally. At a personal level, I would also like to remember the unqualified support, my parents, family and staff of the Child Development Centre have continuously bestowed on me.

As the name suggests, the Indian Academy of Pediatrics is an academic body of pediatricians committed to the welfare of children of India, that includes the adolescents as per the UN Convention. On behalf of the IAP Executive Board, kindly permit me to unfold a "Seven Point Presidential Plan of Action - 2004".

The Academy has committed itself to look after children up to the age of 18 years and hence proposes to introduce this year itself, Family Life Education classes at Higher Secondary School level.

Due to the improved newborn care services, many Very Low Birth Weight babies are able to survive today, but often with an increased risk for future psychomotor retardation. Hence the Academy in association with the National Neonatology Forum proposes to organize neuro-developmental follow up programs and

promote developmental friendly well-baby clinics at all pediatric facilities.

In India underutilization of research opportunities and facilities has been due to lack of expertise in developing multidisciplinary research projects. In order to overcome this, the Academy proposes to introduce research methodology workshops in all regions of India, utilizing expertise of IndiaCLEN members.

While the academic institutions can provide the research base for advancement in the field of pediatric education, the benefit of these advances will not get transferred to the needy children until and unless the practicing pediatricians get hands on training in pediatric sub specialties. The Academy proposes to introduce fellowship programs in major pediatric sub specialties in a phased manner.

The progress that the disciplines of pediatrics have made is phenomenal and every pediatrician in India felt proud when the IAP Text Book of Pediatrics was released. The Academy proposes to update and publish the next edition of the same.

The present unacceptably high mortality and morbidity among the deprived rural and urban slum children would not improve until each and every pediatrician in India has access to correct practice guidelines. To make it possible the Academy proposes to make available and keep updating informative drug formulary CD Roms.

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We must not forget that most of the progress that we have made, has not reached the most vulnerable tribal children. Those pediatricians choosing to work in these difficult areas need encouragement and support of professional colleagues and hence the Academy proposes to constitute an IAP Committee for Tribal Health. We may also learn from the tribes, the basics of protecting our environment. Let each one of us - IAP members take a vow today that we would encourage parents of every newborn that we see, to plant a tree in the name of the child and protect it for the sake of the child.

Surely the task ahead is mammoth, impossible by one person, difficult even by 45 Executive Board members but would become

really easy, when 14,000 of you offer unconditional support, for the sake of the poorest of the poor child in India.

The vibrant network of IAP Branches across the country is our asset. May I solicit your wholehearted support for the final push for polio eradication.

Thanking you all in the name of almighty.

Jai Hind,

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