



One Day Pre-Conference Workshop

On

Promoting Positive Parenting

Serena Hotel, Islamabad

10th December, 2021

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ACRONYMS

PAFEC	Pakistan Alliance for Early Childhood
PAHCHAAN	Protection and Help of Children Against Abuse and Neglect
NGO	Non-Government Organization
INGO	International Non-Government Organization
ACEs	Adverse Childhood Experiences
VAC	Violence Against Children
DEAR	Drop Everything and Read
NCRC	National Commission for Rights of the Child



INTRODUCTION

Pakistan Pediatric Association holds its annual conferences by rotation in all provinces of Pakistan for dissemination of latest updates in Pediatrics. It is also a place for networking and exchange of ideas related to child rights particularly rights to protection. About 1500 pediatricians from all over Pakistan and many from abroad attend these conferences every year. This year the 20th National Pediatric Conference was held on 10-12 December, 2021 at Serena Hotel, Islamabad. It contained many pre and post conference workshops, plenary and concurrent scientific sessions.

Pakistan Alliance For Early Childhood Development (PAFEC), Protection and Help of Children Against Abuse and Neglect (PAHCHAAN) in collaboration with Pakistan Pediatric Association-Child Rights Group (PPA-CRG) and conducted the Pre-Conference Workshop on “Promoting Positive Parenting in Pakistan” in order to ensure promotion of positive social norms and preventing children from violence. This workshop was part of the 20th National Pediatric Conference of Pakistan Pediatric Association conducted at Serena Hotel on

10th December 2021 from 9 am to 1 pm. It was in line with the theme of the conference “Preventing Stunting, Building Nation, and Saving Future”.

OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

- Bringing together different stakeholders on a single platform to discuss positive parenting and its effects on Child Development, especially Child Protection from violence and harmful traditional practices such as child marriage and child labor
- Understanding the importance of positive parenting practices versus Adverse Childhood Experiences, in child development and protection
- Discussing the modalities of structuring positive parenting awareness and training across the country through the government and non-government partnerships.

The pre-conference workshop was organized on 10th December, 2021. The workshop was opened by Ms. Qudsia Mahtab Mehmood with the recitation from the Holy Quran. Welcome note address was conducted by the Guest of Honor Dr. Tufail Muhammad. He welcomed the



participants and introduced the role of parenting in early childhood development and reinforced the need of focused approach on early childhood development and child protection.

After welcome address, Dr. Rai Asghar was invited; who is the head of Department of Pediatrics at Rawalpindi Medical University and the chairman of the organising committee of Pakistan Pediatrics Conference. In his address, on behalf of Pakistan Pediatrics Association he welcomed all the worthy guests and speakers. He said that role of positive parenting cannot be denied and he is thankful to organisers for arranging a huge pre-conference workshop on this much needed topic. He expressed his hope for a successful event.

PRESENTATIONS BY RESOURCE PERSONS

Afterwards Ms. Khadija Khan, CEO PAFEC talked in detail about the background and objectives of the workshop. She said that it is very important to create awareness about early childhood development among parents. So that they can play a positive role as parents from the conception of the child.

She said that research based scientific solutions for early childhood development are need of the time. Policy recommendations will be made during the course of the workshop and presence of different stakeholders at a single platform is the highlight for today's activity, she added. She also emphasized on the aim of promoting positive parenting through



capacity building and awareness campaigns and government engagement with various stakeholders. For the first keynote speech on "Understanding the Importance of Positive Parenting for a Nation" she invited renowned psychiatrist Professor Dr. Mowadat Rana.

In his keynote speech Dr. Rana presented the concept of soul development. He said that parenting with love is the ultimate goal of parenting but in our society the situation is different. Our nation is more focused on

physical development and eating healthy food but focusing on physical development cannot build a character of the nation. It is important to teach attitude and develop attitude then we will have humane in our society. Blessed soul is the highest achievement and make human a humane. Otherwise, we will have soul less citizens, he said. He then presented the Holy Triad of parenting and national leadership which can be achieved by Halal and deserved earning and doing the right things instead of preaching.

The second keynote speech was presented by Dr. Naeem Zafar, President PAHCHAN, on “Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and their long-term Mental and Physical Impact on Children and Adults”. He started his speech with a case study of Fareeda who is a 21-year-old female student of bachelors. In her childhood her father frequently beat her, her sisters and brother used abusive language. Her father is a drug addict, frequently stays out of home without informing the family and usually threatens them to leave them permanently. At home he shouts and yells on children and mother. He also hits their mother and does not fulfil any of the basic needs such as

food, school fee, clothing etc. Now the mother also started to ignore her children. Whenever they ask for food or clothes the parents ignore them. Conflict between parents has been impossible to resolve over the years. Consequently, all siblings have started to feel revenge against father; they have become violent, aggressive, misbehave and fight among themselves. He then further analysed the case on the basis of her conditions and history of stress, tension, feeling of rejection, crying spells and one suicidal attempt. He said that it all happened because she was living in an abusive environment and there was physical abuse, verbal abuse and emotional neglect. This all created psychological stress and trauma which has deteriorated her health.

He then linked these adverse childhood experiences with personality development of children. He defined adverse childhood experiences, or ACEs, are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood (0-17 years). ACEs are linked to chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance use problems in adulthood. ACEs can also negatively impact education, job opportunities, and earning potential. However, ACEs can be



prevented if children are provided with safe home, caring community and clean environment. He further emphasized on three types of stresses, positive, tolerable and toxic. A child's brain development is adversely affected by the harmful experiences of his/her childhood. He also shared that research has shown that a large number of economic burden is imposed on the protection and rehabilitation sectors to minimize the adverse effects of childhood.

After the keynote speakers Ms. Khadija Khan introduced the panellists and started the panel discussion by inviting Dr. Muhammad Moaz who is a Child Specialist. His topic was "Parenting during Early Childhood, Physical Health, Growth & Development".

He started with the example of child health, nutrition and its relationship with brain development. He said it depends on parents how they want to shape the brain of their child by ensuring adequate nutrition and health monitoring. He further added that most of the time parents are gratifying the child but not fulfilling their responsibilities including providing balance food which is an essential requirement for the child's growth. Emphasizing on the

needs of different childhood stages he said that every stage such as infants, preschool, school going and teens has different needs which have to be addressed keeping in mind the different requirements. Talking about the importance of 1st 1000days (from conception to age 2), Dr Moaz said is the foundation of human life and if this phase is neglected for any reasons, children suffer badly, developing potential and complicated developmental issues. Children he said go through two key developmental phases during 1st 1000 days; one is physical development and the other one is neurodevelopment/brain development. These developments, he said are dependent on healthy nutrition, care and stimulation. Talking about the speed of brain development he said that more than 1 million new neuronal connections per seconds are formed in the first thousand days. He then linked the neuro development with motor development, sensory development, cognitive development and socioemotional development. Emphasizing on growth monitoring he said that impairment in neurodevelopment can affect later stages of development and physical development has its own checks such as weight, height,

head size and milestones. He concluded his talk by highlighting that nutrition, prevention and treatment can lead child's life in a positive direction, provided that the child is appropriately fed, vaccinated and all the required care is being provided. He gave the tip of triple A to parents; tripe A means Appetite, Appearance and Activity and if there is no issue in triple A then the child is healthy.

Dr Shelina Bhemani was the next presenter and her focus was "Recipe for Playful Parenting - Its Impact on Psychosocial & Emotional Development of Children". Her presentation was recorded and run during the panel discussion. In her presentation she emphasized on the FUN for parenting and described FUN as F for family engagement, U for understanding child developmental principles, and N for provision of nurturing experiences. How this recipe can be achieved is very simple and just needs parents' attention. It is simple and low cost. Every parent can practice it at home. Children love faces and through this fun exercise parents can detach children from screens and gadgets. Playing with parents can boost child's positive behavior and build healthy relationship. She also emphasized that one

concept at a time will help children understand better.

After the FUN presentation Mr. Rafique Tahir talked about "Reading to Children, Creating Book Bonding, and School Readiness". He said that to improve cognitive skills of a child reading to them is a very important activity. When we begin reading aloud to our children, it essentially provides them with background knowledge on their young world, which helps them make sense of what they see, hear, and read. According to his experience of Pakistan Reading Project, reading culture has disappeared due to several reasons, books are expensive and there is no role model for children. He said PRP approach is an effective way to promoting reading culture. Reading is a life skill and it promotes and increases vocabulary, brain function, memory and knowledge, he added. He emphasized that DEAR time practice is very important; Drop Everything and Read time, better known as DEAR time, is a time regularly set aside in the classroom schedule for both students and their teachers to "drop everything and read." DEAR time conveniently accommodates a variety of student interests and ability levels, since each

student selects for himself/herself the book(s) he/she wishes to read. When DEAR becomes a regular part of the classroom schedule, each student brings a book from home or selects a book from the library before DEAR time begins. DEAR approach should be employed by parents at home as well as parent's involvement in reading helps children in many ways and also prepares them for school.



Professor Dr. Aisha Mehnaz talked about the “Digital Influences, Impact of Screen Time on Child Development”. She said that research indicates that 1 in 4 school-going children suffer from developmental delays, difficulty in communication, language problem, impaired motor skills, and emotional deficit. She also discussed the adverse impact of advertising on children that it is significantly contributing to poor health and nutritional issues in children like obesity and emotional problems. Young

children are cognitively and psychologically immature and cannot differentiate right and wrong, they are defenseless and are an easy target.

Ms. Zahida Manzoor's session was on “Online Dangers and Parental Controls”. She talked about the internet and protection of children. They need protection from online sexual exploitation in an online world which is often a reflection of society at large. Online abuse of children takes many forms, she said, such as children are stalked, harassed and sexually abused and exploited. She further explained that culprits may produce, distribute and consume child sexual abuse material, victimize children through live streaming of child sexual abuse, online grooming of children for sexual exploitation and bullying. She recommended that children, parents and caregivers need to create safe spaces online and parents have to monitor their children's activity through different digital solutions.

The last presenter was Ms. Afshan Tehseen Bajwa. Her presentation was about role of positive parenting skills. She talked about the distortions prevailing in society in the form of bad attitudes, negative behaviors, intolerance, violence,

cheating, injustice & discriminations. She described parenting as “the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood”. She then talked about parenting style, describing it as a psychological construct representing standard strategies that parents use in their child rearing. She asked the participants about their parenting styles; who has authoritative parenting style and who are detached, permissive, indulgent or authoritarian parents.



She further explained in detail about these parenting styles: authoritarian parents are demanding but not responsive and they are rigid in their rules. They expect absolute obedience from the child without any questioning and prefer to maintain strict discipline. Authoritative parents show respect for the opinions of their children

and they are both responsive and demanding. They are firm, but they discipline their children with love and affection, rather than power. Permissive parents have little or no more control over the behavior of their children. Indulgent parents are responsive but not especially demanding. They have a few expectations of their children and impose little or inconsistent discipline. There are empty threats of punishment without setting limits. Detached parents are neither responsive nor demanding. They may be careless or unaware of their child needs for affection and discipline. Ms. Afhsan said that all parenting styles have different effect on childhood. Parenting style depicts the way children are raised and nowadays many parents are detached parents due to modern lifestyle.

QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

After the panel discussion, twenty minutes were consumed by the panelists to answer the questions of the participants. It was very encouraging to see the commitment and interest of participants so they keenly talked about the topic, made comments and asked questions. The first question was about reading an Arabic text without

translation in childhood and its impact on child's personality. Mr. Rafique Tahir replied that it is evident that such text is not understandable for child at the beginning but gradually with the help of the parents, the child will make sense of it. Ms. Farhanda, a participant asked that despite all the efforts and awareness raising the quality of parenting is deteriorating. The panelists responded that modernization, exposure to all sorts of information and decaying of social values have a strong impact on the quality of parenting and child rearing; parents just think that sending kids to school is their ultimate goal which is not right, they have to understand and realize the fact that tarbiat and their involvement in children's day to day routine is as important as sending them to school. Another participant asked from Ms. Afshan Tehseen that why there is no satisfactory work on children's issues by National Commission for Child Welfare. She replied that she is representing National Commission for Child Rights not NCCW. She said that NCRC is focused on child rights and protection and many projects are underway to address the child rights issues. Another participant asked about the birth order of children and asked why siblings behave differently. The panelists

said that every child has his own personality and psychological needs may differ. Therefore, parents need to understand their children's psychology and act accordingly. There were many other questions by the participants but due to time constraint the Q&A session ended at lunch.

RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSION

At the end Dr. Naeem Zafar concluded the session by highlighting the importance of promoting positive parenting for early childhood development. He emphasized the importance of safe spaces for children's development and growth and protecting them from harm. He presented the following recommendations:

- Government of Pakistan along with civil society should design a programme on early childhood development that can reach large number of families and help them understand the significance of holistic ECD.
- A working group should be formed to identify the gaps and opportunities in delivery of existing services and reach out to those who

are in distress, homeless and vulnerable.

- The working group should also work as a guidance force for parents to understand and access services.
- Government and Donors should fund research projects, focused on developing guidelines for policy makers and program administrators and managers on how to scale effective parenting programmes as widely and rapidly as possible. The research should take in to account organisations, programme and system level factors as well as quality improvement. Support for scaling the programmes developed through this research might include cost tools, measurement toolkits, and implementation guidelines.
- Human Resource development on early childhood is the need of the time. Professional development in universities is required.
- Parents support groups under the supervision of public private partnerships need to be formed at district and tehsil level so that the message of positive parenting can reach to the grassroots.

Chief Guest Ms. Wajiha Qamar, Parliamentary Secretary for the Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training in her remarks appreciated the panel and said that her seniors are present in the panel and it's an honour for her to share the head table with them. She said that government is in the process of finalizing the Early Childhood Development policy. At the end, she distributed certificates and shields to panelists and guest of honor.

PARTICIPATION

PARTICIPANTS DETAILS

The one-day training workshop consisted of a total of 74 participants who were representing NGOs, INGOs, donors, multilateral and bilateral organizations, academia, government institutes and departments and early childhood development experts and practitioner.

PANELISTS DETAILS

The workshop was conducted by a panel of experts on different topics related to [Promoting Positive Parenting](#). The panel was moderated by Ms. Khadija Khan. Details are as following:

1. Keynote Speech by Prof. Dr. Mowadat Rana, Psychiatrist Rawalpindi

Topic: [Understanding the Importance of Positive Parenting for a Nation](#)

2. Keynote Speech by Dr. Naeem Zafar, President Protection and Help of Children against Abuse and Neglect (PAHCHAN)

Topic: [Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\) and their long-term Mental and Physical Impact on Children and Adults](#)

3. Dr. Muhammad Moaz, Child Specialist, Convener Pakistan Pediatric Association Lahore Chapter

Topic: [Parenting during Early Childhood, Physical Health, Growth & Development](#)

4. Dr Shelina Bhemani, Asst Professor, Research & Lead ECD Parenting Programme Aga Khan University

Topic: [Recipe for Playful Parenting - Its Impact on Psychosocial & Emotional Development of Children](#)

5. Mr. Muhammad Rafique Tahir, Former Joint Educational Advisor, Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training

Topic: [Reading to Children, Creating Book Bonding, School Readiness](#)

6. Prof Dr. Aisha Mehnaz, Chairperson Konpal Child Protection Society

Topic: [Digital Influences, Impact of Screen time on Child Development](#)

7. Ms. Zahida Manzoor, Child Protection Officer UNICEF Lahore

[Online Dangers and Parental Controls](#)

8. Ms. Afshan Tehseen Bajwa, Chairperson, National Commission on the Rights of the Child

[Parental Responsibility in Child Protection & Safeguarding](#)



WORKSHOP IN PICTURES



WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

ATTENDANCE OF THE WORKSHOP

WORKSHOP GALLERY