



Statement to the World Health Assembly 2014

Early Childhood Development

International Pediatric Association

Early childhood is a unique time of remarkable physical, cognitive, social and emotional development. Events in the first few years of life are formative and play a vital role in building human capital, breaking the cycle of poverty, promoting economic productivity, and reducing social disparities and inequities. Over 200 million children – survive to year 5 but do not reach their full potential with an estimated 20 per cent loss in adult productivity.

Consistent and strong evidence continuously demonstrates that when the quality of stimulation, support and nurturance is deficient, child development is seriously affected. Early interventions for disadvantaged children lead to improvements in children's survival, health, growth, cognitive and social development and success as adults.

WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND MEMBER STATES OF WHA TO:

1. ADOPT PUBLIC POLICY SUPPORTING EARLY CHILD DEVELOPMENT WHICH-

- Recognizes the childhood experience as a major determinant of a child's later success or risk of failure
- Reduces fragmentation and develop a comprehensive early childhood system that addresses the whole child
- Values and supports the needs of families with different compositions, cultures.

2. PUBLIC POLICY SUPPORTING QUALITY CHILDHOOD SHOULD INCLUDE:

- An accepting environment responsive to individual differences, appreciating individual capabilities, and respectful regardless of a person's health, culture or, developmental, economic, or social status
- A child centered environment which helps them develop self-confidence and the ability to make appropriate choices and decisions
- A safe, supportive environment that fosters physical health and psychological development at a pace appropriate to each individual child
- An environment rich in verbal and written communication
- A dependable conflict free environment serving to balance the stress experienced by all children during normal growth and change

The International Pediatric Association (IPA) is a non-governmental organization with a membership of 144 National Pediatric Societies from 139 countries, 10 Regional Pediatric Societies representing all areas of the world, and 13 International Pediatric Specialty Societies. The IPA works collaboratively with member societies to mobilize networks of pediatricians for advocacy and programs in child health, working whenever possible with UN agencies. IPA works in close partnership with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) on global vaccine priorities, and with AAP and the Albert B Sabin Vaccine Institute (SVI) on the Measles and Rubella Initiative.

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