

The Editors' Musings

DR TINA TAN

Editor

Dr Tan is a psychiatrist in private practice and an alumnus of Duke-NUS Medical School. She treats mental health conditions in all age groups but has a special interest in caring for the elderly. With a love for the written word, she makes time for reading, writing and self-publishing on top of caring for her patients and loved ones.



Children are our future.

And on that dramatic note, I am pleased to present this month's issue. In recent years, the Integrated Platform for Research in Advancing Maternal and Child Health Outcomes (IPRAMHO) – led by KK Women's and Children's Hospital, in partnership with SingHealth Polyclinics and National Healthcare Group Polyclinics – have developed guidelines on maternal and child health that are useful to us not just as clinicians, but as parents too. We have asked various experts to comment on the three topics: (1) the 24-hour activity guidelines for children under seven years, (2) nutrition for our infants and those up to aged two years, and (3) the management of perinatal mental health (this one is close to my heart for several reasons).

In addition, Dr Chie Zhi Ying has provided her input on these guidelines and their relevance from a primary care perspective, while Prof Lee Yung Seng has commented on the longer-term perspective needed to prioritise "health from conception" and how it enables everyone to age in a healthy manner.

Reading the contributions, especially the article by Prof Lee, brings to mind a book that has made waves lately in my corner of social media, *The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood Is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness* by Jonathan Haidt. Now, I have not read the book, but it makes several points that resonate with me, both as a parent and a mental health professional. Namely, that our children are growing up in a very different world from what we know, with a myriad of new dangers that we may not be well equipped to handle, particularly in relation to social media. Are we prepared to help our children navigate the treacherous waters in a manner that is safe and age-appropriate for them? We have to, and we must be comprehensive, holistic and timely about it. Because these are the ones who will care for us when we are no longer able to look after ourselves.

Perhaps I am being a worrywart. After all, it is said that each generation will always worry about the next, and that everyone will turn out fine. Or so we hope.

DR CHIE ZHI YING

Deputy Editor

Dr Chie is a family physician working in the National Healthcare Group Polyclinics. She also holds a Master of Public Health from the National University of Singapore and is a designated workplace doctor. She enjoys freelance writing and writes for Chinese dailies *Lianhe Zaobao*, *Shin Min Daily News* and health magazine *Health No. 1*. She can be contacted at chiezhiying@gmail.com.



As a family physician working in a polyclinic, I have the good opportunity to see babies and children in my daily practice, whether for routine development assessments or for other clinical complaints. No matter how tiring the day might be, just looking at the many cute babies and children would brighten up my day. The beautiful smiles and sparkling bright eyes of the little ones are constant reminders of the joy and excitement of life.

When we face the myriad of questions that anxious parents and caregivers might have, having our own local paediatrics guidelines really comes in handy when resolving their doubts. It is equally rewarding to see the smiles on the parents' faces as they leave the consultation rooms with their concerns fully addressed. For this, I applaud the great

efforts of the various authors behind these useful guidelines.

In this May issue focusing on community paediatrics, we are privileged to have A/Prof Chua Mei Chien, Dr Mohammad Ashik Bin Zainuddin, Dr Elizabeth Siak, Prof Fabian Yap and Prof Tan Kok Hian share their insights with us on the IPRAMHO maternal and child health guidelines.

We are also delighted to have Prof Lee Yung Seng shed light on preventive maternal and infant health. Lastly, it is refreshing to read Dr Jimmy Teo's sharing of his intriguing journey of tracing his ancestral roots.

Parenting is often said to be the toughest job on earth, with huge responsibility that never ends. Here is a toast to all parents out there for your love and dedication to your little ones. With that, sit back and enjoy this issue. ♦