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formerly known as Association of Pediatric Societies of the SouthEast Asian Region (APSSEAR)

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LANDMARK LAW

Australia, Malaysia & Singapore Bans Social Media for Under-16 from December 10, 2025 and January 1, 2026 Respectively



Dennemeyer.com

Photo by REUTERS

Australia, first in the world to ban social media for under-16

Australia on Wednesday (December 10, 2025), became the first country in the world to ban social media for children under 16, blocking access in a move welcomed by many parents and child advocates but criticised by major technology companies and free-speech advocates.

Starting at midnight (1300 GMT on Tuesday), 10 of the largest platforms including TikTok and Alphabet's YouTube and Meta's Instagram and Facebook, were ordered to block children or face fines of up to A\$49.5 million (\$33 million) under the new law, which is being closely watched by regulators worldwide.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Celebrating Partnership and Resilience in the Asia Pacific Region



Dear esteemed colleagues, affiliates, and partners in child health,

As we conclude another challenging yet incredibly productive year, I extend my warmest greetings to you all. This September-to-December quarter has showcased both the resilience of our communities and the strength of our association as we collaboratively tackle critical pediatric health challenges across the Asia Pacific.

Before we reflect on our achievements, my heart goes out to the families and communities devastated by recent calamities. We send our deepest sympathies and words of comfort to our colleagues and the people of the Philippines, who have bravely faced relentless earthquakes, flooding, and the devastating impact of Typhoons Kalmaegi and Fung-wong.

Our thoughts are also with Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and Sri Lanka as they recover from severe flooding and cyclones, and the victims of the tragic condominium fire in Hong Kong. APPA stands ready to support our regional societies in their recovery efforts, especially in protecting the health of the children most affected.

Our shared advocacy work has never been more vital, and I am proud of the cosponsored initiatives that have recently advanced pediatric public health policy and which are featured in this Bulletin issue:

- **Australia, Malaysia and Singapore to Ban Social Media for Children Under 16 starting December 10, 2025 for Australia and January 1, 2026 for Malaysia and Singapore:** *A bold legislative step prioritizing pediatric digital wellness and protection against online harms.*
- **Thailand's Multi-Sector Approach to Protect Children from E-cigarette:** *A timely, multi-pronged effort utilizing education and strengthened policy to curb the alarming rise of youth e-cigarette use.*
- **WSPID 2025 Summit by Prof. Emeritus Dr. Usa Thisyakorn of Thailand:** *A pivotal gathering that fostered regional collaboration and knowledge exchange on critical infectious disease challenges, led by one of Asia's PID leaders.*

• **19th APCR Flyer / International Pediatric Events:** *Essential resources promoting continuous professional development and showcasing the best of Asian pediatric research on the global stage.*

• **APPA Newest Member, Brunei Paediatric Society held a Symposium on The Tide of Maternal Obesity & Diabetes-Addressing Dangers & Implications":** *The focus was on improving outcome for mothers and newborns.*

• **The 13th Singapore Paediatric and Perinatal Annual Congress (SiPPAC) was held in Singapore, September this year:** *SiPPAC was held to address the dynamic challenges and advancements in healthcare for children, mothers, and families across the region.*

This quarter was also marked by the phenomenal success of our APPA Webinar series, demonstrating the power of inter-society knowledge exchange. Included in this Bulletin are highlights of the following webinars:

- **APPA-Hong Kong Paediatric Society on Vaccine Hesitancy** (August 2nd)
- **APPA-Indian Academy of Pediatrics, focus on Tuberculosis** (October 4th)
- **APPA-Sri Lanka College of Paediatricians on Childhood Obesity** (October 26th) &
- **APPA-Singapore Paediatric Society on Screen Use in Children - A Growing Challenge** (November 8th)

These webinars addressed topics directly impacting the daily lives of children in our region, from infectious disease management to the burgeoning crisis of digital screen dependency and obesity.

As the year draws to a close, I wish all APPA colleagues, your families, and affiliates a restful and joyous Holiday Season. May you find time to recharge, celebrate safely, and prepare for a New Year filled with hope and renewed dedication to the children of the Asia Pacific.

With sincere appreciation,

- Dr. Joselyn A. Eusebio
President, Asia Pacific Pediatric Association (APPA)





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Cover image Xinhua via AFP & NurPhoto via AFP

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese called it "a proud day" for families and cast the law as proof that policymakers can curb online harms that have outpaced traditional safeguards.

"This will make an enormous difference. It is one of the biggest social and cultural changes that our nation has faced," Albanese told a news conference on Wednesday. "It's a profound reform which will continue to reverberate around the world."

In a video message, Albanese urged children to "start a new sport, new instrument, or read that book that has been sitting there for some time on your shelf," ahead of Australia's summer school break starting later this month.

While the government has said the ban would not be perfect in its operation, about 200,000 accounts were deactivated by Wednesday on TikTok alone, with "hundreds of thousands" more to be blocked in the next few days.

The rollout caps a year of debate over whether any country could practically stop children from using platforms embedded in daily life, and begins a live test for governments frustrated that social media firms have been slow to implement harm-reduction measures.

Albanese's centre-left government proposed the landmark law citing research showing harms to mental health from the overuse of social media among young teens, including misinformation, bullying and harmful depictions of body image.

www.reuters.com/thestar.com.my, December 11, 2025

Malaysians under the age of 16 will no longer be allowed to create social media accounts starting January 1, 2026

The new rule will require age checks using MyKad, passports, or MyDigital ID under eKYC.

Malaysian Communications Minister, Fahmi Fadzil stated that the move is part of a broader initiative to enhance online safety for children under the upcoming Online Safety Act, which will take effect on January 1, 2026.

According to the New Straits Times, November 25, 2025, Fahmi said all social media platforms will be required to verify users' ages using electronic know-your-customer (eKYC) checks. Users will need to confirm their identity with official documents such as MyKad, passports, or MyDigital ID.

"We expect all platform providers to be ready to implement eKYC by next year (2026)," he was quoted as saying. Fahmi added that Malaysia is looking at international models, noting that Australia will begin enforcing its own under-16 social media ban next month (December 10, 2025).

Australia's rules will require platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, X, YouTube, Reddit, Twitch, and Kick to deactivate existing under-16 accounts and block new ones starting 10 December, 2025. In Australia, platforms that fail to take "reasonable steps" could be fined up to AUD49.5 million (RM132.5 million). However, services like YouTube Kids, Google Classroom, LinkedIn, and Pinterest are exempt under the new rule.

Fahmi said Malaysia will study how other countries implement their restrictions to find the best approach locally.

Last month, Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim said a string of violent cases in schools were tied to unregulated phone and social media use. "The responsibility, of course, goes back to parents and schools, but almost all of these issues stem from the (unchecked) use of mobile phones and social media," he said, adding that action was needed even if the move "will definitely trigger mixed reactions".

- says.com/New Straits Times, November 25, 2025

No smartphone use in secondary schools in Singapore from January 1, 2026, including during recess and CCAs

From January 1, 2026, secondary school students in Singapore will not be allowed to use smartphones and smartwatches outside of lesson time, such as during recess and co-curricular activities (CCAs), as part of tightened guidelines on screen use.

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Currently, they are limited in their use of these devices only during regular lesson time. The new tightened guidelines, which will also cover supplementary, enrichment and or remedial lessons, align with the restrictions put in place for primary school pupils since January 2025.

The revised guidelines by the Ministry of Education (MOE) are part of a series of initiatives announced on Nov 30 to help children and their parents develop healthy digital habits.

MOE said in a statement that students' devices will have to be kept in designated storage areas such as lockers or in students' school bags during school hours.

Smartwatches fall under the guidelines as they enable communication through messaging and access to apps including social media, which can lead to distractions, passive screen use and reduced interaction with their peers, it added.

"Where necessary, schools may allow students to use smartphones by exception," the ministry said.

A ministry spokesman said some secondary schools had adopted these tighter guidelines after they were announced

for primary schools, with positive outcomes. This included improved student well-being, enhanced focus, and more physical interaction during unstructured time such as breaks.

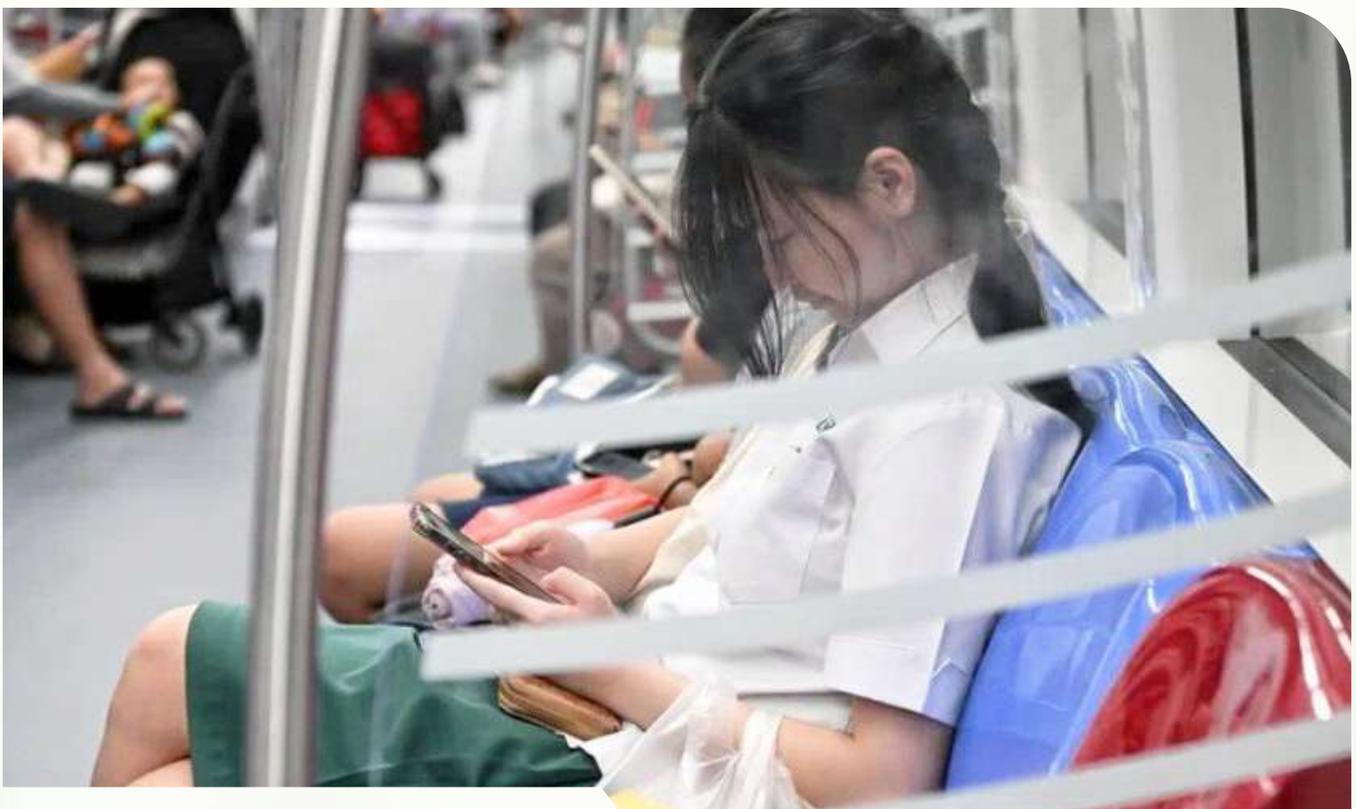
MOE said it also would bring forward the default time that personal learning devices are locked nightly to 10.30pm, from the current 11pm. This will kick in from January, meaning the devices will be on sleep mode nightly from 10.30pm to 6.30am.

"This can help students to manage device use before bedtime, and nudge them to sleep earlier," it said.

Outside of school hours, parents can opt for their child's personal learning device to either keep to default management application settings, operate on modified settings, or disable the application entirely, which means the devices' default screen time limits can be relaxed.

MOE said it strongly encouraged parents who had opted for less restrictive options to consider aligning with the 10.30pm shift.

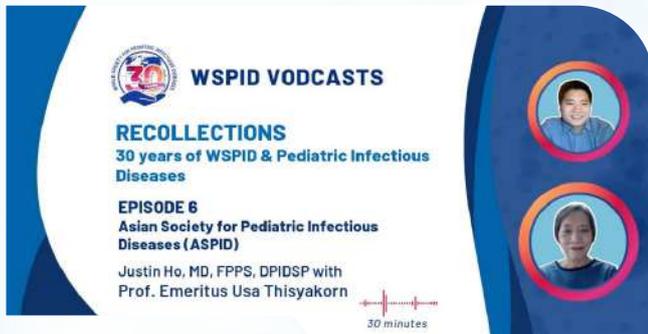
asiaone.com, November 30, 2025



The revised guidelines by the Ministry of Education (MOE) are part of a series of initiatives announced on November 30 to help children and their parents develop healthy digital habits. Photo: The Straits Times



14th World Congress of the World Society for Pediatric Infectious Diseases (WSPID)



The 14th World Congress of the World Society for Pediatric Infectious Diseases (WSPID 2025) was held from October 28-31, 2025, at the Bangkok International Trade Exhibition Centre (BITEC), Bangkok, Thailand. This article summarizes only the parts where the author was invited as a Speaker by WSPID

30 years of WSPID and Pediatric Infectious Diseases¹

This was an interview with Professor Emeritus Usa Thisyakorn by Dr. Justine Ho, a Young WSPID member and pediatric infectious disease expert from the Philippines, on the occasion of WSPID's 30th anniversary. This was due to Prof. Emeritus Dr. Usa Thisyakorn multiple terms as a WSPID Executive Board member, as well as being the former President of the Asian Society for Pediatric Infectious Diseases (ASPID). The interview was broadcast on WSPID Vodcasts Episode 6: Asian Society for Pediatric Infectious Diseases during the WSPID 2025 Congress.

The summary highlighted that WSPID is an organization that fosters academic cooperation among pediatric infectious disease societies at all levels - national, regional, and global. This collaboration enables the exchange of academic knowledge and the creation of a network of pediatric infectious disease specialists at every level, ultimately leading to the development of sustainable strategies for the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases in children.

Cooperation from the Asian region, which has the largest child population globally, is highly significant. The differences across various global contexts pose a challenge to this development, likened to conducting a large orchestra with musicians from every continent. This challenge must be transformed into an opportunity. Therefore, a mutual understanding through effective communication is essential to achieve a common goal. WSPID's latest project, "the Blue Book", involved gathering pediatric infectious disease experts from around the world to co-author chapters contributing.

This project required excellent cooperation from all parties and was successfully completed.²

Globally, many countries currently face demographic changes, resulting in fewer children, a problem that requires future solutions. The evolution of the pediatric infectious disease field over the past 30 years has been a complex journey, from adapting to new high-level technology to disease prevention and control. It requires maintaining a balance between accurate clinical observation and the use of advanced scientific tools.



APPA Secretary General, Prof. Dr. Zulkifli Ismail (third from left), taking a selfie with Prof. Emeritus Dr. Usa and a few delegates

WSPID Workshop 1: World CAFÉ Panel: Inspiring Women in Leadership Stories³

Two moderators of the workshop included Prof. Dr. Asha Bowen, WSPID President from Australia who introduced the idea that leaders must recognize the importance of mentors and role models in their professional development, as well as achieving work-life balance. She noted that this is a challenge but is achievable with support and the right attitude. Another moderator of the workshop Prof. Dr. Adilia Warris from United Kingdom commented that women often bear multiple responsibilities, which can lead to burnout. She emphasized that it is crucial to learn to say no when necessary and that maintaining a balance between professional responsibilities and personal health and well-being is vital for long-term success.

The four panelists provided the following key insights:

1. Prof. Dr. Regina Oladokun from Nigeria was determined to be a doctor from childhood and received support from her teachers. Regarding family life, she believes both men and women have their respective duties to perform, which leads to family support.

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Prof. Emeritus Dr. Usa with several women delegates of the Congress

2. Prof. Emeritus Dr. Usa Thisyakorn from Thailand began by citing a male leader who offered the motto that the key to leadership is being "The most humble servant". She personally believes that parental upbringing is a crucial foundation, alongside family support. Leaders must prioritize partnership, participation, and teamwork, which are essential for achieving success in leadership.
3. Dr. Angela Gentile from Argentina noted that work-life balance is necessary, especially in the early stages of a career. Women often face challenges in ascending to leadership positions, but perseverance and support can help to overcome these obstacles.
4. Prof. Emeritus Dr. Lulu C. Bravo from Philippines stated that leadership begins at home, and the family plays a vital role in shaping one's career and leadership style. Collaboration and partnership are essential for success in any field. Women often face the challenge of balancing family and career, but family support can make a significant difference.

Meet the Experts: "Dengue"⁴

Prof. Emeritus Dr. Usa Thisyakorn from Thailand, reviewed the World Health Organization's (WHO) three goals regarding dengue virus infection: 75% global surveillance coverage, zero mortality rate, and a 25% reduction in global incidence by the year 2030.

A challenge in the Asian region is the epidemiological shift of patients, increasingly found in adults rather than children. The mortality rate in adult patients is higher than in children due to adults having underlying chronic diseases and challenges in diagnosing the disease in adults.

The Tropical Medicine Research Platform, Chulalongkorn University, is conducting research to find solutions for the prevention of severe dengue. WHO is seeking solutions with dengue experts worldwide regarding antiviral drugs for

dengue virus infection. However, disease prevention and control through "vector control and vaccination" remain paramount.

The Asia Dengue Voice and Action Junior activity was initiated at the Asia Dengue Summit 2023 in Bangkok to ensure the sustainability of dengue prevention and control.^{5,6}

Prof. Dr. Alfonso J Rodriguez Morales from Colombia introduced the topic by stating that climate change, migration, and social factors greatly influence the epidemiology of dengue virus infection. This has led to a historical increase in dengue virus infection cases in the Latin American region, resulting in a severe economic burden.

Integrated vector control and vaccination are important in reducing these impacts, particularly in high-burden areas. These measures are also medical considerations for travelers to endemic dengue areas. Effective communication and public education are crucial for dengue prevention and control.



Prof. Emeritus Dr. Usa with Prof. Dr. Alfonso J Rodriguez Morales from Colombia

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- Prepared by Prof. Emeritus Dr. Usa Thisyakorn, Tropical Medicine Platform, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand



Symposium on “*The Tide of Maternal Obesity & Diabetes - Addressing Dangers & Implications*” Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam



Group Photo of Speakers and Symposium Working Committee

The Brunei Paediatric Society (BPS), in collaboration with the Federation of Asian and Oceania Perinatal Societies (FAOPS), successfully hosted the Brunei Perinatal Symposium 2025 on July 25, 2025 with the theme “The Tide of Maternal Obesity & Diabetes - Addressing Dangers & Implications.

Local and international delegates along with prominent speakers from across the region gathered at the Empire Hotel in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam for a day of scientific updates and networking focused on improving outcomes for mothers and newborns.

In her foreword speech, Dr. Elizabeth Chong, BPS Vice President and Consultant Neonatologist and Chairperson of the Symposium, highlighted the great responsibility borne by healthcare providers in delivering safe, high-quality maternal and neonatal care, noting that “our individual contribution does count... we need to find ways to keep ourselves inspired.” Dr. Chong also emphasized the urgency of addressing rising rates of maternal obesity, diabetes, and hypertension, which have implications on neonatal health and long-term outcomes in Brunei.

The morning opened with Dr. Chong’s welcome address, followed by Prof. Dr. Tan Kok Hian, Senior Consultant in

Maternal Fetal Medicine Department, KK Women’s and Children’s Hospital, Singapore, who delivered an overview on diabetes and obesity complicating pregnancy. Prof. Dr. Ranjan Pejaver, Chief Neonatologist, People Tree @ Meenakshi Hospital, Bangalore, India, then provided insights into the clinical challenges surrounding infants of diabetic mothers (IDM).

Brunei introduced pneumococcal vaccine into the National Childhood Immunization Schedule

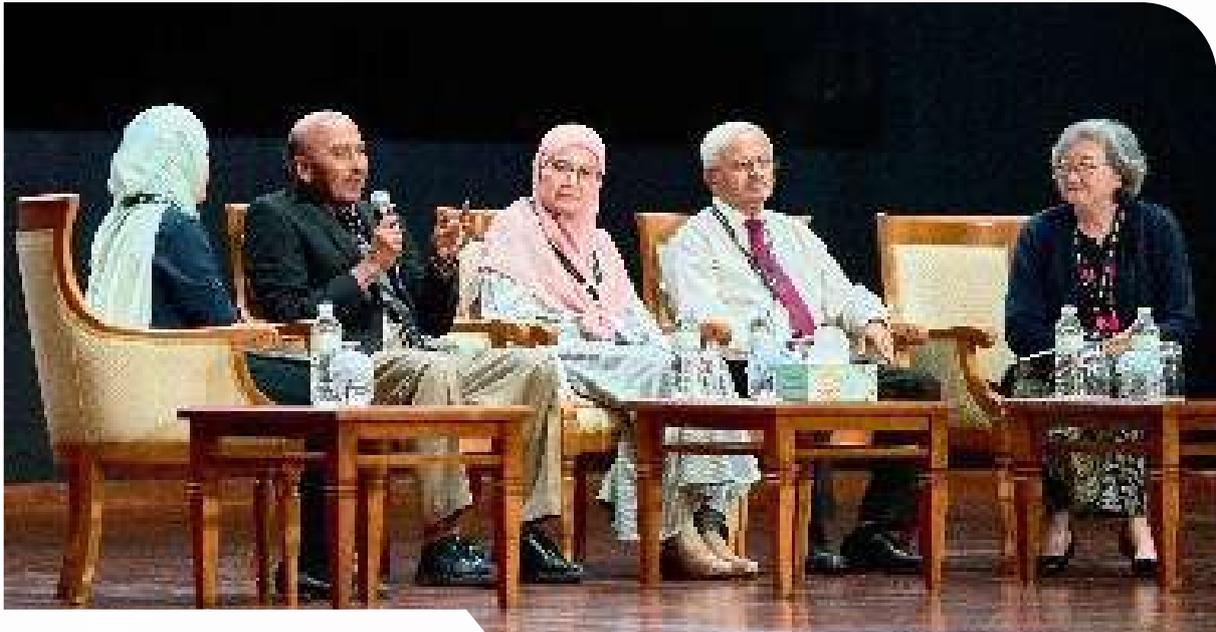
Delegates were also updated on emerging trends in childhood pneumococcal disease, with Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniel Goh, Senior Consultant, Paediatric Pulmonary Medicine, National University Hospital, Singapore, presenting on epidemiology and developments in prevention. This session coincided with Brunei’s recent introduction of the pneumococcal vaccine into the national childhood immunization schedule.

In the afternoon, Dr. Yew Teik Guan, clinician, Yong Clinic and Dispensary in Bandar Seri Begawan, presented on pneumococcal vaccination in the Brunei context, followed by Professor Sam Rajadurai, Senior Consultant, Department of Neonatology, KK Women’s and Children’s Hospital, Singapore, who addressed hypoglycaemia management in IDMs across

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Q & A session

Singapore, Malaysia, and India, and later spoke on congenital malformations associated with maternal diabetes. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Azanna Ahmad Kamar, Head, Department of Paediatrics, Universiti Malaya Medical Centre, Malaysia, concluded the day with a talk on long-term problems and challenges faced by infants of diabetic mothers.

The symposium also featured a poster competition, vendor exhibitions, and lively discussions during Q&A session. The poster competition was open to delegates from various specialties, with the winning poster titled 'Prevalence and Predictors of Postpartum Depression in Brunei Darussalam' by Nur Syahirah Chua binti Mohammad Firdaus Chua, a psychologist, at the Ministry of Health, Brunei Darussalam.

A second day of continuing medical education was held at RIPAS Hospital on July 26, which included additional lectures from regional experts focusing on infants of obese mothers, hypertensive disorders in pregnancy, and infants of hypertensive mothers.

Meanwhile, the Brunei Paediatric Society is excited to announce next year's international symposium, partnering with IPOKRATES. It will be held from **May 2 to 4, 2026 with the theme 'When the going gets tough on NICU: Holistic care, POCUS and QA Methods'**.



*Dr. Elizabeth Chong in her welcoming address.
Photo: Borneo Post*

One of the pre-symposium workshops will be focusing on Point of Care Ultrasound (POCUS) and will have hands on teaching on Neonatal Cranial and Lung ultrasound, ECHO and line placement. A parallel workshop will be looking at Quality Assurance and Improvement. More details will be coming soon. Follow our Instagram **@bruneipaediatricsociety** for updates. For any queries: contact us at **secretary@bruneipaediatricsociety.com**.

- **Dr. Hafizah Salleh, Communications and Marketing Officer, Brunei Paediatric Society**



Thailand’s Multi-Sector Approach to Protect Children from E-Cigarette Harms (2025)

Building Role Models Across Healthcare, Families, and Schools

Online Training Harms of Cigarettes and E-Cigarettes on pregnant women, fetuses, children and adults - February 8, 2025

Thailand has adopted a multi-sectoral collaborative approach to address the growing use of e-cigarettes among children and adolescents.

The Thai Society of Pediatric Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine (TPRC), under the Pediatric Society of Thailand (PST), has contributed as an active professional partner in national public-health initiatives led by major public-health networks. In 2025, three key national projects were led by pediatricians across the country engaging the healthcare, family, and education sectors to protect children from e-cigarette harms.

National Online Training Health Professionals

Led by the Thai Medical Technology Profession Against Tobacco and the Medical Technology Council, this **“National Online Training Program (2024-2026)”** aims to strengthen knowledge and advocacy among health professionals. The first session, held on February 8, 2025, focused on “The Harms of Tobacco and E-Cigarettes on Pregnancy, Children, and Families”. Pediatric experts from TPRC served as speakers, sharing evidence-based practices in tobacco and e-cigarette control for both clinical and community settings. The session reached 2,813 participants nationwide, achieving over 90% satisfaction and greater readiness to integrate cessation

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counseling into practice, demonstrating the strength of collaboration across health professional networks toward a smoke-free Thailand.

Empowering Father Leaders

From March to July 2025, the **“Father Leaders for Smoke-Free Families”** organised by the Network for Community-Based Learning Development with support from Thai Health Promotion foundation, empowered fathers as role models for smoke-free homes. Through a family-based curriculum integrating health education, communication, and creative media, pediatricians mentored and guided seven community networks to implement local campaigns under the theme **“Smoke-Free Families, Healthy Communities.”** The project raised public awareness, built peer-support networks, and achieved widely successful cessation outcomes.

Inspiring Youth Ambassadors

In partnership with Vajiravudh College, pediatricians launched the **“Hero Academy”** Campaign on August 31, 2025, training 50 student leaders (ages 11-14) as Brand Ambassadors under the theme **“Be a Hero, not a Smoker”**. The programme featured interactive workshops and role-play activities on e-cigarette harms, communication, and peer influence. These young leaders later reached over 400 younger peers in student-led activities fostering a vape-free school culture. Feedback indicated increased understanding, self-confidence, and motivation to advocate a smoke-free environment.

Conclusion

Together, these initiatives illustrate a unified, replicable, multi-sectoral strategy against e-cigarette use across generations - creating positive role models at every touchpoint in children’s lives - from healthcare facilities to homes to schools, and advancing the shared vision of a Smoke-Free and Vape-Free Generation, protecting the health and future of Thai children.



Fathers pledging Smoke-Free Families

Pediatricians - through TPRC and PST - play a pivotal coordinating role, ensuring that children’s health remains central to every collaborative effort.

Children: The Future We Must Safeguard

Children are our future. The e-cigarette epidemic threatens not only their health but their potential to lead and thrive. By continuous collaboration among families, educators, healthcare professionals, and society at large, pediatricians can empower others to champion children’s health.

Establishing positive role models at every stage of a child’s development - from home to school to healthcare - forms the cornerstone of sustainable prevention.

Every child deserves a smoke-free future. Every adult can help create it. Together, we can protect our children and secure the health of generations to come.

**- By the Thai Society of Pediatric Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine (TPRC)
Under the Pediatric Society of Thailand (PST)**



Students participating in the “Hero Academy Initiative” on August 31, 2025 - ready to serve as brand ambassadors for the “Be a Hero, Not a Smoker” campaign



APPA-HKPS Webinar on Vaccine Hesitancy



The programme included:

1. Boosting Vaccination Coverage - Local Challenges
Dr. Daniel Chiu, Past President, The Hong Kong Paediatric Society
2. Evidence-based Approaches to Address Vaccine Hesitancy
Dr. Anna Lisa T. Ong-Lim, Professor, Division of Infectious & Tropical Disease in Pediatric College of Medicine, UP-PGH (University of the Philippines - Philippine General Hospital)
3. Increasing Vaccine Confidence Nationwide through Advocacy
Prof. Dr. Zulkifli Ismail, Secretary General, Asia Pacific Pediatric Association (APPA)

Reviewed the topics from different perspective

The speakers have reviewed the topic from different perspectives including those successful measures by local governments, through scientific and evidence-based approaches to increase awareness and knowledge-based for the public; as well as increasing vaccine confidence and health literacy of the public and parents through community advocacy work. All these demonstrated the concerted efforts from the paediatric profession, policy-makers, local governments, and community synergies to promote immunization against vaccine preventable diseases to ensure healthy growth and development of our beloved children.

There were 330 attendees in this webinar with very fruitful and dynamic discussions at the Panel session. The recording of the Webinar is now put onto the HKPS website (<https://medicine.org.hk/hkps/>) and all APPA members are welcome to review.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were set up in 2015 and aimed to be achieved in 2030. SDG Goal 3 is on "Good Health and Wellbeing". In Target 3.b, "Support research, development and access to affordable vaccines and medicines", vaccine coverage is a major target that needs to be fulfilled. Vaccine hesitancy due to multifactorial reasons is definitely one of the hurdles in reaching this important target. Hopefully through the APPA network, we can work together on the issue to let parents and public understand the rationale of vaccine preventable diseases and what measures can be taken to ensure good health and wellbeing of the new generations.

APPA is always committed to the promotion of paediatric care and child health in the region, encouragement of paediatric researches and professional knowledge transfer through collaboration among member societies and regional meetings.

The APPA webinar with a specific theme each time hosted by APPA and a member society is a new initiative started in 2025 by the APPA leadership with promising responses.

It also serves as a good platform to discuss ad hoc paediatric topics that have created shared concerns in the Asia Pacific region or even globally.

The "APPA Webinar on Vaccine Hesitancy" held on Aug 2, 2025 was jointly organized by APPA and The Hong Kong Paediatric Society (HKPS) with experts from Hong Kong, Philippine, and Malaysia to talk about "Vaccine Hesitancy" which is a long-lasting public health issue with significant impacts on infection control and vaccine preventable childhood diseases.



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Dr. Daniel Chiu, Dr. Zulkifli Ismail and Dr. Anna Lisa T. Ong-Lim at the webinar



Dr. Joselyn Eusebio, Dr. Lilian Wong, Dr. Zulkifli Ismail and Dr. Anna Lisa T. Ong-Lim at the webinar



Dr. Bill Chan and Dr. Daniel Chiu at the HKPS Child Sim Talk Platform



Dr. Aaron Yu and Dr. Purdy Chan joined the webinar physically at the HPKS Premise

We greatly appreciated the three speakers for their valuable sharing, the IT Team of the Philippine Pediatric Society for the Poster design, the APPA secretariat for dissemination of meeting information as well as Dr. Bill Chan from Hong Kong

who is the mastermind behind the scene for the technical support of the HKPS Child Sim Talk Platform for this Webinar.
- Dr. Lilian Wong, President, Hong Kong Paediatric Society (HKPS)



13th SiPPAC 2025

13th SiPPAC 2025 (Singapore Paediatric and Perinatal Annual Congress) was organised by the Perinatal Society of Singapore between September 11 and 13, 2025. The congress was supported by the Singapore Paediatric Society (SPS) and College of Paediatrics and Child Health Singapore.

This year's theme, 'Evolving Trends in the Concept and Practice of Perinatal, Neonatal & Paediatric Health in the Asia Pacific Region' reflects our commitment to addressing the dynamic challenges and advancements in healthcare for children, mothers and families across the region. Wide Range of topics were addressed by experts who are renowned from Singapore and overseas. International speakers from Australia, India, Qatar, Philippines and France shared their knowledge and experience in the field of Paediatrics, Neonatology and immunology.

The congress was well attended with more than 300 delegates from Southeast Asia and rest of the world. The exciting Scientific Programme had 6 plenary sessions, 21 symposia, and free-paper and poster sessions covering a comprehensive range of topics. Pre congress workshops were conducted covering POCUS, Cranial ultrasound workshops and Kangaroo mother care. Genetics, nutrition and neurodevelopmental care topics were covered in the pre-congress educational update.

SIPPAC 2025 Main Congress

SIPPAC 2025 Main congress kicked off with prestigious Dr. Haridas Memorial lectureship organised by the Singapore Paediatric Society (SPS).

Two days of the main congress had several interesting and exciting topics. These included Update on New Therapeutic Therapies for Congenital Hyperinsulinism by Prof. Dr. Khalid



This Session was chaired by Dr. Alvin Chang, President, Singapore Paediatrics Society

Hussain from SIDRA, Qatar. This session was chaired by Prof. Dr. Victor Samuel Rajadurai, President of the Perinatal Society of Singapore.

Nursing symposia, psychosocial well-being of child and young adults, practical paediatrics, ethics, paediatric gastroenterology, insights from the delivery room, artificial intelligence and future of neonatal care, sleep disorders in infants & children, uncommon causes of respiratory distress in term neonates and developmental paediatrics were some of the session highlights in SIPPAC 2025. These sessions drew keen interest among the participants.

The Congress ended with the 18th College of Paediatrics (CPCS) lecture and dinner in the evening.

College of Paediatrics and Child Health lecture on **“Evolution of Paediatric Respiratory Medicine and Allergy over the Last Few Decades in Singapore”** was delivered by **Prof. Dr. Anne Goh Eng Neo**, Senior Consultant in the Paediatric Allergy Service and Respiratory Medicine Service at KK Hospital, Singapore. She was felicitated for her dedicated service in this field by Prof. Dr. Victor Samuel Rajadurai, President of Perinatal



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Saumya Shekhar Jamuar, Senior Consultant in the department of Genetics, KK Hospital Singapore spoke on the discovery of Jamuar Syndrome and the Future of Paediatric Genetics in Singapore.



SPS also organised the prestigious Stuart Gan Memorial Lecture on “Gene Therapy for Inborn Errors of Immunity” by Prof Fabio Candotti, University of Lausanne Hospital, Switzerland

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Third APPA Executive Committee (EC) and Standing Committee (SC) Zoom Meeting, October 5, 2025

The Third APPA Executive Committee (EC) / Standing Committee (SC) Meeting was held on October 5, 2025. The meeting was organised to discuss issues pertaining to APPA. The agenda included: updates on the 19th Asia Pacific Congress of Pediatrics (APCP) to be held from July 26 - 29, 2026 at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH) in Colombo, Sri Lanka, issues regarding the APPA e-Journal (Asia Pacific Journal of Pediatrics and Child Health) and other matters.



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Society of Singapore and Organising Chairperson of the SIPPAC 2025.

The congress concluded with the College dinner and Awards Ceremony for the young investigators and winners of the oral papers and poster presentations held earlier during the congress.

Overall, the 13th SiPPAC 2025 evoked enthusiastic participation from all quarters for its wide spectrum of interesting topics and presence of eminent speakers from Singapore and overseas.

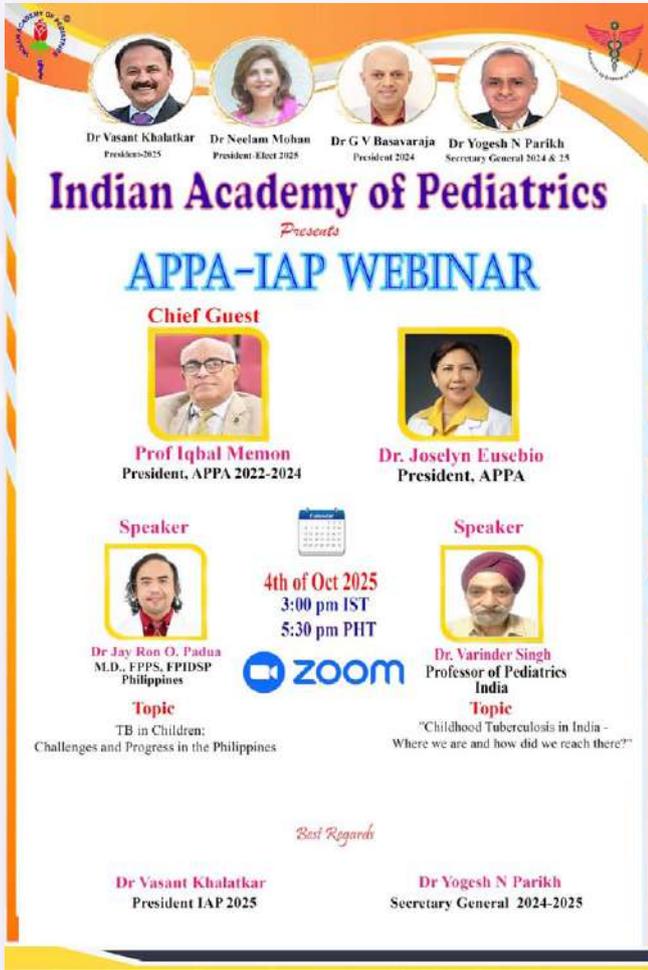
- **Dr Sridhar Arunachalam,**
Honorary Secretary,
Singapore Paediatric Society (SPS).



This session was chaired by Dr Liew Woei Kang, President of the Allergy Clinical Immunology Society of Singapore



APPA-IAP Webinar Report



The Asia Pacific Pediatric Association (APPA) and the Indian Academy of Pediatrics (IAP) jointly hosted the inaugural APPA-IAP Webinar on October 4, 2025, bringing together pediatricians and child health experts from India, the Philippines, and across the Asia-Pacific region. The session was graced by the presence of Chief Guest, Prof. Iqbal Memon who served as President, APPA 2022-2024 added significance to this collaborative academic initiative.

Dr. Vasant M. Khalatkar, President, IAP, delivered the presidential address. He extended festive wishes and reaffirmed the strong partnership between APPA and IAP, noting how such collaborations contribute to improving pediatric health regionally and globally.

Dr. Khalatkar emphasized India's commitment to eliminating tuberculosis by 2030 and highlighted the value of shared learning across countries. He expressed appreciation for the scientific faculty and conveyed heartfelt condolences following the recent earthquake in the Philippines. The presence and support of Secretary General IAP Dr. Yogesh N. Parikh further strengthened the institutional leadership contributing to this joint initiative.

Dr. Joselyn A. Eusebio, President, APPA, described childhood tuberculosis as a "silent epidemic" affecting millions across Asia. She reflected on the shared challenges faced by India and the Philippines particularly in early diagnosis and access to care and acknowledged advances such as molecular testing and all-oral treatment regimens. Dr. Eusebio, formally opened the webinar, underscoring the importance of continued APPA-IAP collaboration.

Scientific Session

The scientific session was led by Dr. Jay Ron O. Padua (Philippines), with additional insights from Dr. Varinder Singh (India). The faculty presented four complex and instructive pediatric TB cases that showcased the wide spectrum of disease severity and clinical presentations ranging from disseminated tuberculosis with multiorgan involvement to TB-related rectovaginal fistulas, inferior vena cava thrombosis, and tuberculosis in an HIV-infected toddler with joint disease. These cases highlighted ongoing challenges in pediatric TB, including paucibacillary disease and the difficulty of obtaining reliable respiratory samples. The discussion underscored the critical role of early bacteriologic confirmation through GeneXpert, cultures, and other molecular platforms.

The session also reviewed major developments in the diagnostic landscape. The shift toward Universal Drug-Susceptibility Testing (DST) especially for rifampicin resistance was highlighted as a transformative step. Advances in India, including the wider use of GeneXpert, the WHO-endorsed TruNAT platform, Line Probe Assays, and newly approved ICMR technologies, were discussed in detail. The updated diagnostic algorithm, prioritizing structured symptom assessment, chest X-ray triage, and targeted nucleic acid testing, was presented as a practical and context-appropriate approach for clinicians. Speakers also noted the limitations of generic WHO algorithms in certain settings, emphasizing the importance of region-specific evidence. Updates on treatment included discussion of shorter regimens for non-severe TB, the complexities surrounding disease classification, and the essential role of accurate specimen collection in guiding therapy.

The APPA-IAP Webinar served as a dynamic platform for collaboration, innovation, and the exchange of cutting-edge knowledge in pediatric tuberculosis care. It showcased the latest advances in diagnosis and management, equipping clinicians across the Asia-Pacific with practical insights. This successful partnership reaffirms APPA and IAP's unwavering commitment to excellence, capacity building, and the advancement of child health.

- Indian Academy of Pediatrics (IAP), November 28, 2025



APPA-SLCP Webinar on Childhood Obesity

WEBINAR ON CHILDHOOD OBESITY

PROGRAMME

	<p>5:00 PM – 5:05 PM Opening Remarks DR. JOSELYN A. EUSEBIO <i>President, Asia Pacific Pediatric Association</i></p>
	<p>5:05 PM – 5:10 PM INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKERS PROF. SUMUDU NIMALI SENEVIRATNE <i>Director, Centre for Complex Hormonal Disorders, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo</i></p>
	<p>5:10 PM – 5:35 PM The Growing Burden of Childhood Obesity in the Asia-Pacific Region: Magnitude, Trends, and Challenges DR. EMMA A. LLANTO <i>Past President, Philippine Society of Adolescent Medicine Specialists</i></p>
	<p>5:35 PM – 6:00 PM The Role of Physical Activity in Preventing and Controlling Childhood Obesity: Strategies for the APPA Region PROF. DR. ANTHONY OKELY <i>co-Director, WHO Collaborating Centre for Children's Food, Nutrition and Physical Activity</i></p>
	<p>6:00 PM – 6:25 PM Influence of Food Marketing on Childhood Obesity: Addressing Commercial Pressures and Promoting Healthy Choices PROF. DR. TILAKAVATI KARUPAIAH <i>SRI Professor, School Of BioSciences, Faculty of Health & Medical Sciences</i></p>
<p>6:25 PM – 6:55 PM Q&A and Panel Discussion</p>	
	<p>6:55 PM – 7:00 PM Closing Remarks PROF. DR. PUJITHA WICKRAMASINGHE <i>President, Sri Lanka College of Paediatricians</i></p>

A video webinar on childhood obesity, co-hosted by the Asia Pacific Pediatric Association (APPA) and the Sri Lanka College of Paediatricians (SLCP), was held in October 26, 2025.

Childhood obesity in the Asia-Pacific region shows a rapid surge due to socioeconomic transition leading to rapid urbanization and change of lifestyles, leading to a generation burdened with chronic non-communicable diseases.

Dr. Emma Lanto's presentation, paediatrician specializing in adolescent medicine from the Philippines, discussed the growing burden of childhood obesity in the Asia-Pacific region. The environment, which was full of outdoor play, healthy snacks has been replaced by a toxic food environment dominated by ultra-processed foods and sedentariness. Obesity is a complex, chronic disease, not merely a lifestyle choice but requiring early intensive and comprehensive action to mitigate it.

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Impact of overweight and obesity is immense. Medically it can affect any organ head to toe and psychosocially leads to stigma, discrimination, bullying, depression. The economic impact at both micro and macro levels is very high, with increased healthcare costs (to the state and out of pocket), reduced quality of life, reduce productivity both to individual, and state with affecting about 2% of world's GDP. Childhood obesity as well as its health consequences can track from childhood to adulthood. This highlights how childhood habits which leads to obesity that could track into adulthood, contributing to the NCD burden.

Globally overweight and obesity are rising rapidly with more than half a billion children world wide suffering from it surpassing under nutrition numbers. More than quarter of them live in south Asia region. Low and middle-income countries show the steepest rise.

Many factors contribute to this epidemic

There are many factors that contribute to this epidemic such as ultra-processed foods that are loaded with unhealthy foods, social determinants of health which are at individual level (genetics, infant feeding, family attitudes), interpersonal (family SES, food security, parental stress), institutional (school food, playgrounds, stigma), community (safe recreation, walkable neighborhoods, fast food access), and government levels (policies on agriculture, food marketing). Unrestricted food marketing, lack of access to safe public spaces for physical activity, and insufficient policy implementation / monitoring contributes to the obesity burden.

Action to fight against obesity is pitched at Individual / Family / Clinician levels. Promotion of breastfeeding, introduction of proper complementary feeding, education on healthy habits (diet, physical activity, sleep, gadget use), early detection and intervention for overweight/obesity, and family-centered treatment operates as individual and family level. State has a responsibility to adopt policies to transform food environment, promote healthy marketing such as, front-of-pack labels, taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages, creating healthier food environments, and engaging with youth in policymaking. Individuals also has to adopt responsible behaviour of their lives to adopt healthy lifestyle in order to achieve good health.

Professor Anthony Oaklay, Distinguished Professor of Public Health at the University of Wollongong, Australia, discussed

the role of physical activity in preventing and controlling childhood obesity.

The Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity report and WHO's implementation plan, including guidance on healthy food habits and physical activity. WHO Global Guidelines for Physical Activity, Sedentary Behavior, and Sleep were introduced in 2019 for children under five, integrating them for a 24-hour period.

Consensus Statements

A consensus statement on Asia-Pacific Integrated 24-Hour Movement Guidelines was developed for early years (2023) and for children/adolescents (2021), which included recommendations for Physical Activity, Sedentary Behavior and Sleep.

Time Use and Compositional Analyses explains the concept of "time use" for movement behaviors, emphasizing that we only have 24 hours. Compositional analyses using ternary plots shows how reallocating time between behaviors affects outcomes like waist-to-height ratio. Prof Okley highlighted the importance of judicious reallocation time for components of daily activity of sleep, physical activity and sedentariness. Sleep is one of the most compromised component, but due attention need to be paid where time for sleep should not be taken from physical activity but from sedentary behaviour especially screen time. He also highlighted the importance of creating active societies at home, community, schools and workplaces to achieve the best.

Prof. Dr. Tilakavati Karuppaya, Strategic Research Interest Professor from Taylor's University, Malaysia, discussed the influence of food marketing on childhood obesity, spoke on the topic of the influence of food marketing on childhood obesity. She highlighted the changes that have taken place over the years in food industry from raw unrefined food to highly refined processed energy rich food and how marketing has helped in increasing prices. However, many countries have no proper regulations to counter act the influence made by the food industry on marketing.

She highlighted the importance of adopting proper legislature and enforcing them.

**- Prof. Dr. Pujitha Wickramasinghe
President, Sri Lanka College of Paediatricians**



APPA - SPS Joint Webinar 2025: Screen Use in Children - A Growing Challenge



On November 8, 2025, the **Asia Pacific Pediatric Association (APPA)** and the **Singapore Paediatric Society (SPS)** successfully conducted a joint webinar titled "Screen Use in Children: A Growing Challenge." The virtual event, held via Zoom from **14:00 to 16:20 hours (UTC+8)**, addressed the increasing concerns surrounding screen time and its impact on child health and development.

Programme Highlights

The program featured two insightful presentations. The first, "**Growing Up Digital - Promoting Healthy Screen Habits Amongst Children in Singapore**", was delivered by **Dr. Chong Shang Chee**, Senior Consultant and Head of the Child Development Unit at NUH, alongside **Ms. Guo Siqi**, Senior Assistant Director at the Ministry of Health Singapore.



LATEST SCREEN USE ADVISORY, MOH SINGAPORE

First launched in 2023, then updated in Jan 2025



		
Under 18 months	18 months to 6 years old	7 to 12 years old
<p>No screen use (unless for interactive video chatting). Do not turn on the TV in the background.</p>	<p>Limit screen use to less than 1 hour a day outside school. Children who spend excessive time on screens may experience difficulties in attention, learning and problem-solving. When using screens, choose educational and age-appropriate content. Watch content together and discuss the content with your child. Do not use screens during meals and one hour before bedtime.</p>	<p>Less than 2 hours of screen use a day, unless related to schoolwork. Agree on a screen use plan or timetable. Do not use screens during meals and one hour before bedtime. When using screens, use parental control settings and check content ratings to ensure content is age appropriate. Talk to your child often about what they are viewing online and offer advice regularly. Parents should not give your child access to social media services, and do not give your child mobile devices with unrestricted access to the internet and applications.</p>

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The webinar commenced with a **welcome address** by **Dr. Joselyn Eusebio**, President of APPA, followed by opening remarks from **Dr. Alvin Chang**, President of SPS.



Dr. Joselyn Eusebio, APPA President



Dr. Alvin Chang, President SPS

They discussed strategies for encouraging healthy screen habits and the critical role of healthcare professionals in guiding families.

The second presentation, **“TOUCH Cyberwellness and The Role of Parents and Practitioners in Managing Screen Use”**, was led by **Ms. Anita Low-Lim**, Chief Transformation Officer at TOUCH Community Services. Her talk highlighted the importance of parental involvement and community initiatives in managing screen time effectively.



Participation and Feedback

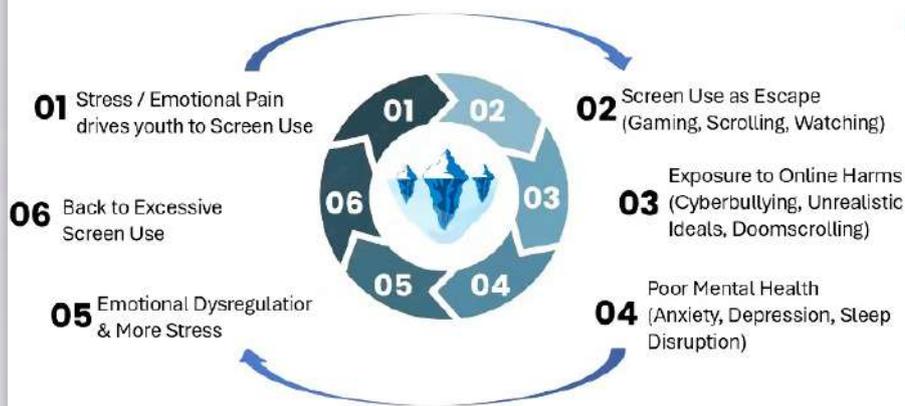
The event drew 263 registrants, with 120 attendees participating live spreading across 13 Asia-Pacific countries. A post-event survey received positive responses, reflecting strong engagement and appreciation for the relevance of the topics. Participants described the session as informative, timely, and well-presented. Some suggested breaking the content into shorter segments and providing access to recordings for those who missed parts of the discussion.

This webinar underscored the urgent need to address screen use among children, a challenge that requires collaboration between healthcare professionals, parents, and policymakers. It also emphasized the importance of practical guidelines and community programs to promote balanced digital habits. Looking ahead, participants expressed interest in developing regional guidelines and conducting further research on screen time across ASEAN countries.

The SPS-APPA webinar successfully highlighted the significance of this issue and set the stage for continued dialogue and action in the Asia-Pacific region.

- Dr. Alvin Chang
President, Singapore Paediatric Society, December 1, 2025

But What’s Beneath Keeps Driving What’s Above





19TH APCP

19th Asia Pacific Congress of Pediatrics (APCP) 2026

July 26-29, 2026

Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH), Colombo, Sri Lanka



INTERNATIONAL PAEDIATRIC EVENTS

2026

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

First Announcement

The International Symposium on "When the Going Gets Tough on NICU: Holistic Care, Pocus and QA Methods."

Hosted by the Brunei Paediatric Society (BPS) and IPOKRATES Foundation

Date: May 2-4, 2026

Venue: Women and Children Centre, Ripas Hospital Al Afiah Hall, Ministry of Health, Brunei Darussalam

Secretariat: secretary@bruneipaediatricsociety.com

Abstract submissions are now being accepted

SINGAPORE

KK Women's and Children's Hospital Developmental Paediatrics Conference 2026

Theme: From awareness to action: Fostering resilience and positive mental health in children and families

Pre-Conference Workshops Date: July 14, 2026

Venue: SingHealth Tower, Singapore

Conference Date: July 15-16, 2026

Venue: Academia, Singapore

Contact: secretariat@sps.org.sg / https://for.sg/dpc-enquiry-form

Call for abstracts will start in mid-January 2026

First Announcement

The 14th Singapore Paediatric and Perinatal Annual Congress (SIPPAC 2026)

Theme: Innovative in Miniature: Paediatric and Perinatal Breakthroughs

Date: September 18-20, 2026

Venue: Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel, Singapore

Abstract Submission Deadline: June 17, 2026

Website: www.perinatal.sg / www.sps.org.sg

NOTE:

These paediatric events are for information purposes and does not constitute any endorsements from the APPA Secretariat.

SRI LANKA

The 19th Asia Pacific Congress of Pediatrics (APCP) 2026

Date: July 26-29, 2026

Venue: Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH), Colombo, Sri Lanka

Website: apcp2026.com **Secretariat:** office@apcp2026.com

SOUTH KOREA

The 19th Congress of Asian Society for Pediatric Research (ASPR 2026) Seoul

Hosted by the Asian Society for Pediatric Research and organized by The Korean Pediatric Society (KPS)

Theme: "Advancing Child Health, Bringing Science and Society"

Date: October 21-23, 2026

Venue: Lotte Hotel World, Seoul, South Korea

Website: www.aspr2026.org **Secretariat:** info@aspr2026.org

The Korean Pediatric Society - Email: pediatrics@pediatrics.or.kr

2028

THAILAND

The 20th Asia Pacific Congress of Pediatrics (APCP) 2028

Venue: Bangkok, Thailand

- Compiled and updated by Fairos Nazri, Executive Secretary, APPA