

# the Enchanted Pediatrician

Winter 2005

**T**EN YEARS! I remember the first

## **CHILD HEALTH HOTLINE.**

It was held in a large room donated by Presbyterian Hospital. We brought in pediatricians from throughout New Mexico – some dozen of us sat around a large table with phones at the ready. And we sat and talked for about eight hours and fielded about 15 calls. We hadn't appreciated the importance of publicizing the event.

For nine years now, we have capitalized on that knowledge, spreading the word through our partners at KOB-TV (thanks, Susan Bradley!) and the Albuquerque Journal (kudos, Jackie Jadrnak!). Erin, our indefatigable executive director, has taken the lead in signing up volunteers and coordinating the annual event.

One hectic night a few years ago, we seem to have hit our peak at 666 callers (I attach no Satanic importance to this). Since then, we have not had so many. The reasons for the yearly numbers are about as elusive as the reasons the Dow goes up or down. Maybe everyone's watching cable TV; maybe we didn't get the message out soon enough; maybe the World Series; maybe the political ads.

So this year we slipped below 100 for the first time since that first year. The event on October 28 was shorter (NBC apparently doesn't want KOB to obscure part of the screen during prime time), and very enjoyable. About eight of us sat around the table at any one time, picking up the phones and talking about our lives as Albuquerqueans and as pediatricians. The Hotline remains one of the best places for Albuquerque pediatricians from all of the major systems to sit together and work at a common goal – to show the community we care.

We answered questions ranging from what to do with a "spitty" four-month old to how to find services for a teenager with Klinefelter's syndrome and no health insurance. Flu shots were one of the topics of the night, for certain.

What will we do next year? Should we consider smaller events more frequently through the year? Can we continue our highly successful Spanish-language call-in program? These will be among the topics of discussion, now that we know that "Curse of the Bambino" has been exorcized.

## **GET WILD FOR THE WYLDER!**

Once again the New Mexico Pediatric Society is proud to announce its annual Wylder lectures series and the beginning of a notable anniversary, our 60<sup>th</sup>. This year our meeting will be held at the Presbyterian Administrative Center in Albuquerque.

On Saturday and Sunday March 5-6, 2005 the New Mexico Pediatric Society and Presbyterian Health Services will present updates from the pulmonary and renal arenas.

Our guest speaker, Greg Redding, MD, Chief of the Pediatric Pulmonary Division at Children's Hospital in Seattle will be presenting two talks, one on wheezing infants and a second on Pulmonary Manifestations of Reflux.

Other presentations on pulmonary and renal issues will be brought to us by a collection of UNM and Presbyterian stars!

UNM Department of Pediatrics Chief Robert Katz, MD will speak on Severe Life Threatening Asthma while Naim Bashir, MD also of UNM, will speak on Pediatric Sleep Apnea. Presbyterian pediatric cardiologist Steve Yabek, MD will discuss Cardiac Implications of Chronic Lung Disease while two new faces to the Albuquerque area and Presbyterian, Guy Kanamori and Loren Glasser will be presenting. Let's give them a warm welcome to the community.

We are also excited about a potpourri of renal talks to be brought to us by the NMPS's new Vice President Robert Miller, MD who will be discussing Hematuria, Proteinuria and Dysuria, while UNM Pediatric Nephrology Chief at John Brandt will discuss the very important new blood pressure guidelines recently adopted by the AAP. Dr. Craig Wong, also of UNM, will be discussing Urinary Tract Infections and Dysfunctional Voiding.

Mark your calendars! We look forward to seeing you in March.

Thanks to all of you who participated, especially to nutritionist Yvette Cruz and nurse practitioner Carolyn Montoya – we were pleased to have all of you!

## *Keeping our Kids Safe:*

### *Upcoming Challenges in Prevention of Unintentional Injury in New Mexico*

Ben Hoffman, MD, FAAP

The 2004-2005 New Mexico legislative session promises to be a busy one from the standpoint of childhood injury prevention. There are likely to be three major initiatives targeting vehicle booster seats, ATV safety and helmets; each will be controversial and will require the assistance of local advocates to help support them.

**Boosters:** Use of a belt-positioning booster seat has been shown to decrease the risk of injury in a crash by 59% compared to seat belt use for children aged 4-7. Use of a seat belt alone is associated with a 38% decrease in injury compared to unrestrained children (JAMA, June, 2003). Currently 27 states have laws that govern use of child passenger safety devices beyond 40 pounds. Current New Mexico law (implemented in July, 2000) requires rear facing car seats for all infants under a year, a rear or forward facing seat for children through age 4 (i.e. up until their fifth birthday), and requires seat belt use after that.

The proposed legislation would require either use of a belt positioning booster seat through age 6 (i.e. until the 7<sup>th</sup> birthday) or use of a seat belt that fits the child properly (this is defined as child sitting fully back against the vehicle seat, the shoulder belt traverses the clavicle completely off the neck, and the lap belt remains low over the hips and proximal thighs- not on the abdomen). This law is very similar to that passed in California last year.

The legislation has been drafted by Safer New Mexico Now; we (the American Automobile Association and I) are currently in the process of developing a support coalition including state and municipal law enforcement, health care organizations, the health department and a variety of other state and local groups. It will be imperative that child health care providers communicate their support for this legislation with their lawmakers.

**ATVs:** On average 4-5 New Mexico children die every year in ATV crashes. A common theme in each death is young age (in 1999, all 4 deaths were associated with an ATV driver of 13 or 14 years of age), lack of adult supervision (none were supervised), and lack of helmet use (none were wearing helmets) (NM Office of the Medical Examiner). In 2003 a coalition including child safety advocates and environmental advocacy groups partnered with the NM Tourism Department to propose legislation regarding ATV's. I participated in the original drafting, including information from the AAP, including the statement on ATV's from the Committee in Violence and Poison Prevention. We pushed strongly for a ban in drivers under age 12 (the AAP recommends under 16), for mandatory helmet use and adult supervision, and a stringent certification/licensing process for children over 12. Ultimately, ATV advocacy groups and dealers were able to water down the proposed legislation, eliminating an age limit. The bill was heard before several committees before becoming tabled.

There is a strong likelihood that this will resurface this year. We again are working with the state, environmental groups and others to pass a law that will protect children by recognizing their physical and emotional limitations on increasingly powerful and dangerous machines. As the legislation progresses, I will be happy to keep people informed.

**Helmets:** Last year there was an initiative driven by the state health department for a comprehensive helmet law to include use with bikes, scooters, skates and skateboards. I have not yet heard much about the plan for this year- I will keep the membership posted.

If anyone has interest in helping to address these and other unintentional injury prevention issues, please contact me at [bhoffman@salud.unm.edu](mailto:bhoffman@salud.unm.edu).

**P**athways Awareness Foundation, a national non-profit organization dedicated to raising community awareness of the benefits of early detection and early therapy for children with physical differences, received an endorsement from the American Academy of Pediatrics for their brochure "Assure the Best for your Baby's Physical Development".

The brochure, designed to educate parents and assist medical professionals, includes a growth and development chart highlighting speech, play and physical developmental milestones from 3 to 15 months of age. This unique tool allows parents to become proactive in tracking their child's development and encourages early treatment for delays.

For free copies of the brochure to distribute to parents or for more information call the "parent-answered" toll-free number at 1-800-955-2445, email at [friends@pathwaysawareness.org](mailto:friends@pathwaysawareness.org) or visit their web-site at [www.pathwaysawareness.org](http://www.pathwaysawareness.org). Pathways believe early detection is the best prevention!