SECOND OPINIONS

Concussion update

In the December 1997 AAP News, you ran a Health Brief on a sports-related concussion article published in 1996 in The Physician and Sportsmedicine. While we were happy you chose concussion as a subject for AAP News, we noticed that particular article did not reflect the most current information available.

As you may remember, the American Academy of Neurology (AAN) published its guidelines for managing concussion in sports in the March 1997 vol. 48, No. 3 issue of its journal, Neurology. The 1996 article reviewed in Health Briefs was published five months before our concussion management guidelines were released — and therefore does not reflect how physicians, athletes, coaches or athletic trainers may have changed their perception of concussion management since that time.

To obtain a copy of the most recent concussion management guidelines, contact AAN customer service at (800) 879-1960.

Julie Emnett
American Academy of Neurology
Minneapolis, Minn.

AAP ‘politically correct’

I applaud Dr. Fredric R. Nelson’s letter to AAP News concerning a resolution supporting legislative efforts to ban partial-birth abortions, which was endorsed by a majority of attendees at the 1997 Annual Chapter Forum, and to see it tabled in a behind-the-scene parliamentary procedure. All because the Academy prefers to be “politically correct.” It’s about time that the Academy take a stand for children born and unborn and not let itself be driven by special-interest groups.

If we are really physicians, then we must come to the rescue of those who have no voice of their own. Let’s be true to our- selves and our profession and keep the religious and political views out of this issue once and for all. As a physician, I challenge anyone who denies that life begins at the moment of conception. Doctors must not seek to bring about death, for life is not an optional quality of being, but the essence of being. The Academy must step forward on behalf of the unborn and respect the will of the majority of its members who support legislative efforts to ban partial-birth abortions. As Dr. Nelson said, “...it appears that the Academy would rather be politically correct than to have the child’s best interest at heart.”

Enrique J. Canton, M.D., FAAP
Miami, Fla.

Parenting irreplaceable

AAP President Joseph R. Zanga, M.D., (AAP News, January 1998) has courageously and eloquently called our attention to the missing message in pediatric anticipatory guidance. Children need regular parental time and attention. It is something that no government program can replace. Trying to play catch up years later is nearly impossible. Parenting is the most difficult and yet most significant responsibility most people ever face.

This is an intuitively obvious but politically incorrect concept that is desperately needed by our society. Does the “body language” of AAP News, making the article and picture as inconspicuous as possible, indicate that you are printing our president’s words through gritted teeth?

Ross S. Olson, M.D., FAAP
Minneapolis, Minn.

Parenting vs. job demands

I was very happy to see Dr. Zanga’s comments on the importance of parents being available to their children. I have essentially suspended my activities in pediatrics in order to be with my kindergartner before and after school. I am fortunate to have the choice to do this, but I would prefer to be able to work during her school hours. I have not yet come up with a job in my geographic area that will permit this. My plea is for pediatricians who agree with Dr. Zanga to support the ability of colleagues to work while their children are at school — work until 9 a.m., take a long mid-day siesta and come back to work at 3 p.m. to relieve the “Mommy” shift! Am I totally dreaming?

Beth Kom, M.D.
Stamford, Conn.

Native American Child Health Advocacy Award

The Committee on Native American Child Health will present the annual Native American Child Health Advocacy Award at the October 1998 AAP Annual Meeting in San Francisco. The award has been established to recognize individuals who have made a major contribution to Native American child health.

• The award is intended for an individual physician or non-physician. Organizations, private groups or health care programs are not eligible.

• Nominations for the AAP Native American Child Health Advocacy Award will be accepted until May 1, 1998. Separate letters of recommendation should be submitted for each nomination. Letters should briefly state the work for which the award might be granted and should include the candidate’s curriculum vitae. 1996 and 1997 nominees may be renominated by submitting a brief letter only.

• Address all nominations to: Gina LaManta, AAP Department of Community Pediatrics, PO. Box 927, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-0927; fax (847) 228-5097.

Please share this announcement with your colleagues. For further information, contact Gina LaManta at (800) 433-9016, ext. 4739.