

The 3rd Arab- ISPCAN Regional Conference on Child Protection

Child Protection in Arab Countries: Working Together for Safer Childhood

**Riyadh Saudi Arabia
1-4 March 2009**

Under the patronage of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz the Saudi National Family Safety Program (NFSP) held the 3rd Arab-ISPCAN Regional Conference on Child Protection in King Faisal Convention Hall on 1-4 March 2009. In Addition to the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect and the Saudi National Guards Health Affairs, another 10 regional and international organization – including WHO and UNICEF - participated in the organization of this event.

Over 1600 participants from 30 countries around the world attended this event. The participants were CAN professionals, politicians and policy makers, and children and youth. More than 90 Arab and international speakers presented their papers in 20 general, specialized and research sessions, 2 training institutes and 16 workshops.

Children participated in the spectacular session "Current and Future Ministers: Children's Rights" where a panel of children discussed their rights with Saudi Ministers of Health, Education, Information and Culture, and Social Affairs. They also participated in a session on corporal punishment, opening and closing ceremonies and conference organization.

The following conference recommendations were announced upon conference conclusion:

- 1- To send a letter to the Custodian of the Holy Mosques King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz expressing conference gratitude for his generous patronage for the event.
- 2- National strategies and action plans for Child Abuse and Neglect are to be prepared, utilizing the outcomes of the UN secretary General Study on Violence Against Children. The strategies and action plans should include effective multisectoral mechanisms for mandatory reporting, response, intervention, and rehabilitation.
- 3- To develop and implement Child Protection Laws in the Arab countries and develop mechanisms to ensure their application.
- 4- Encouragement of researches and national surveys to recognize patterns of Child Abuse and Neglect in Arab countries and develop national data collection tools.
- 5- Inclusion of Child Rights in all educational curricula at the different levels.
- 6- To Raise the community awareness about child's rights and to build the capacities of professionals in the field of prevention of violence against children including legal, health, education and policy makers.
- 7- To improve the quality of the services provided for vulnerable children or children with special needs.
- 8- To forbid all forms of children's corporal punishment in educational and social institutes and substitute them with positive disciplinary methods.

- 9- To enhance effective collaboration between governmental organizations, NGOs, and regional and international organizations in implementation of child' rights and child protection strategies.
- 10- To provide high quality services for the victims of child abuse including medical care, social and psychological support, and legal services.
- 11- Prevention of the violence against the children in the media and communication tools, and to enhance media professionals' capabilities on dealing with child abuse cases and to support the Arab Media Professional Network.
- 12- To encourage effective participation of children in their related policies and strategies through national childhood parliaments.
- 13- To support the role of NGOs in child rights and protection advocacy.
- 14- Establishing Child Help lines in Arab countries and to be considered one of the child protection tools.
- 15- To support national and regional Arab networks working for the protection of children against violence.
- 16- Update the current information available on the child rights and protection web pages in the Arab countries.
- 17- The organizers shall distribute these recommendations to all involved parties through the Arab League.