



## PATRON

Emeritus Prof Hemamali Perera

## PAST PRESIDENTS

Dr Swarna Wijetunge

Dr Sudarshi Seneviratne

Dr Wajantha Kotalawala

## PRESIDENT

Dr Udena Attygalle

## VICE PRESIDENT

Dr Darshani Hettiarachchi

## PRESIDENT-ELECT

Dr Dulangi Dahanayake

## SECRETARY

Dr Miyuru Chandradasa

## ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Dr Anshu Fernando

## TREASURER

Dr Lakshini Wickramasinghe

## ASSISTANT TREASURER

Dr Nilanja Warsapperuma

## EDITOR

Dr Yasodha Rohanachandra

Dr Anuradha Herath

## PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER

Dr Darshani Rupasinghe

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dr Swarna Wijetunge

Dr Ianthica Medagama

Dr T Gadambanathan

Dr Malika Weerasinghe

Dr Senani Wijetunge



## The World Infant, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Day

23<sup>rd</sup> April 2022

### & Challenging times in Sri Lanka

The initiation of a World Infant, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Day is to recognise the global importance of infant, child and adolescent mental health and advocate for the promotion of mental health and prevention of mental illness in infants, children and adolescents. From infancy onwards, there is a need for love and compassion, which is compromised by inadvertent acts of omission or commission that occurs in a crisis. Children and adolescents form a third of the world's population. Research has demonstrated that adverse experiences in childhood impact lifelong mental and physical health. Most mental disorders develop in childhood and adolescence. There is a need to improve understanding of this to create awareness of psychological wellbeing in families and communities.

To safeguard the mental well-being of children and adolescents during this crisis.

- 1) Support them to attend school even with difficulties and shortages as it provides emotional stability to a child.
- 2) Listen to your child and look for distress features such as anger, tearfulness and disinterest in academic work.
- 3) Do your best not to expose them to violence shown on media. You can watch necessary news items and give them an understandable summary.
- 4) Tell them fear and a feeling of uncertainty are normal human responses to crises and allow them to express these in words, pictures, stories, and play activities.
- 5) Instil hope in them, remember your past adverse experiences and state challenging times will pass. Reassure them you will be there to guide them in the future.

Sri Lanka College of Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists will guide parents, teachers, media, and the relevant authorities to uplift the mental health of children and adolescents in Sri Lanka.

You are not alone!

Dr Udena Attygalle – President

Dr Miyuru Chandradasa - Secretary

Sri Lanka College of Child & Adolescent Psychiatrists

Contact Address:

Dr Miyuru Chandradasa, Department of Psychiatry, University of Kelaniya, Ragama.