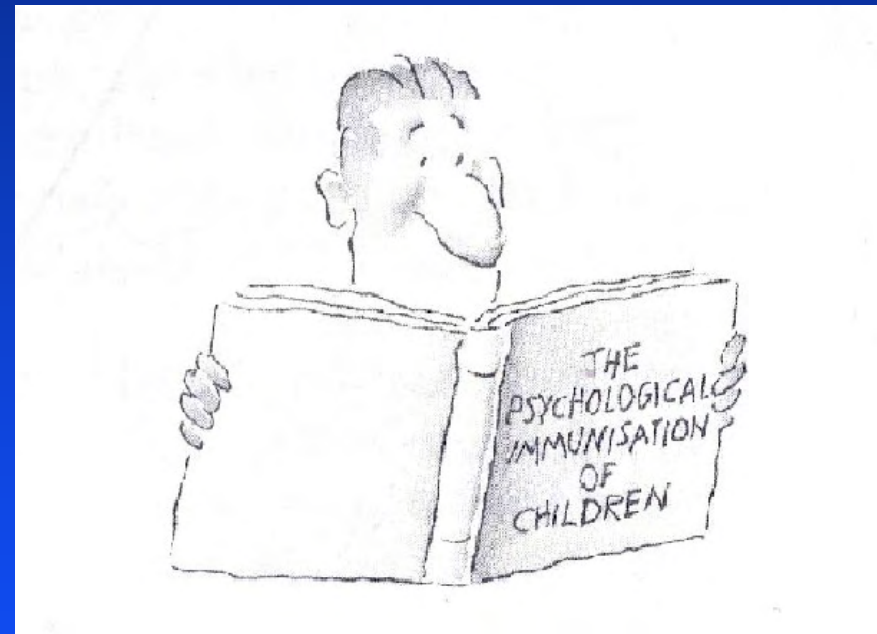


AAWCH's vision for child & adolescent health across Australia

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Australian Association for
the Welfare of Child Health
(AAWCH)

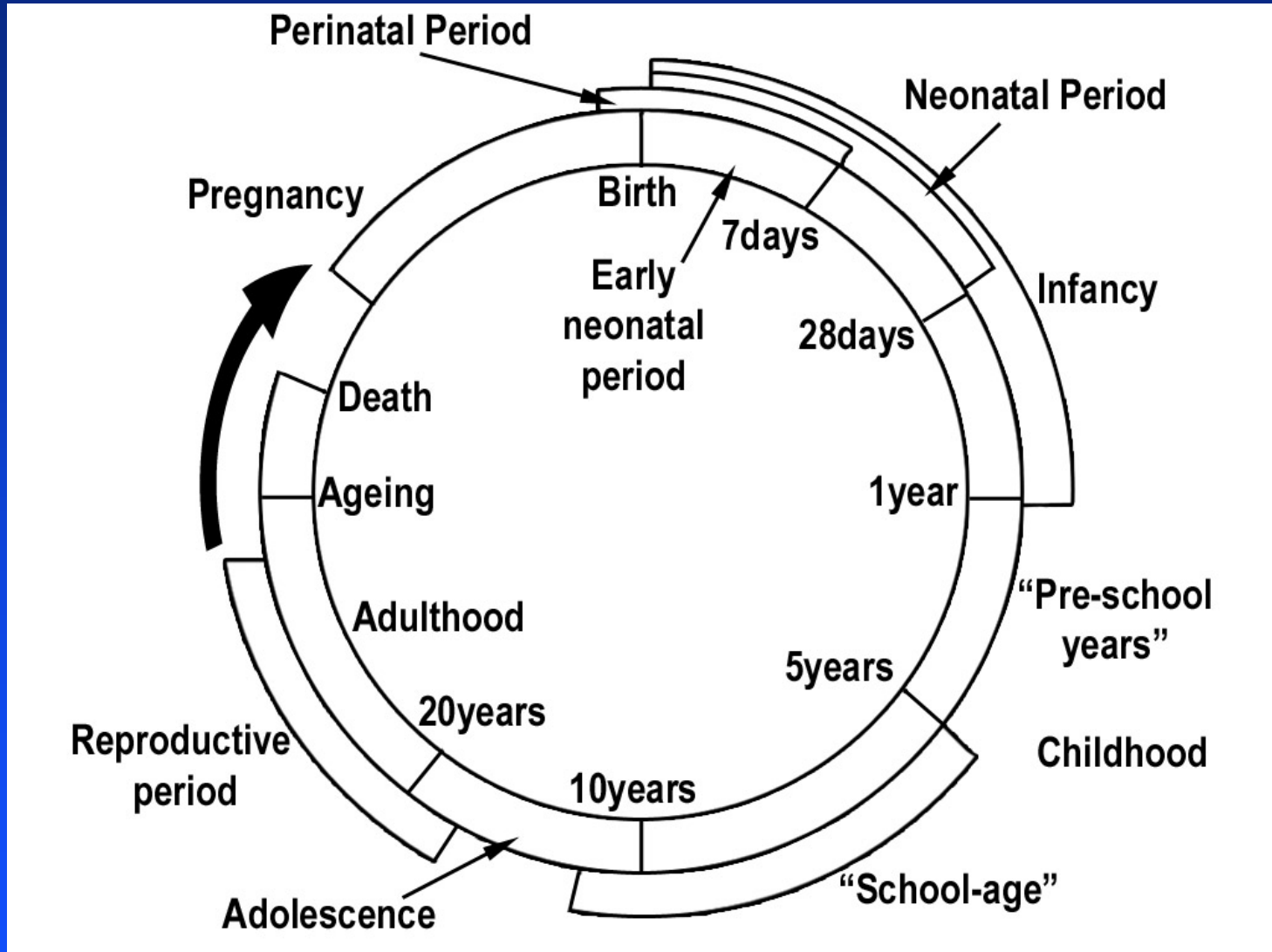


Why are children important?

- Vital for the future strength and success of society
- Not just small adults – differing needs at each developmental stage
- Competing with needs of adults – likely to be overlooked
- Cannot speak for themselves – need advocates



Stages in the life cycle





“No, Jimmy, the Tooth Fairy won’t be visiting you anymore. I’m the Pimple Fairy!”

Why focus on adolescent health?

Adolescent health problems:

- result in great personal, social and monetary costs (costly now)
- are mostly psychosocial and preventable
- contribute to the leading causes of adult morbidity and mortality (costly later)



What is AAWCH?

AAWCH is a national, non-profit organisation of *parents, professionals and community members who work together* to ensure the emotional and social needs of children, adolescents and their families are recognised and met within hospitals and the health care system in Australia. (Established 1973)

AAWCH's values

- Promoting equity of access to quality care
- Valuing opinions of children, young people and their families...
- Supporting family involvement in health care...
- Fostering partnerships between parents/carers and health care providers

AAWCH's values

- Encouraging culturally sensitive health care
- Challenging the status quo to achieve our objectives



AAWCH's achievements

- Parents staying with their child
- Parental involvement in care
- Child-friendly environments
- Importance of trained staff
- Importance of supporting the family
- Importance of play & education

AAWCH's services

- AAWCH Hospital Ward grandparent Scheme
- Hospital Familiarisation Program
- AAWCH Library
- Paediatric Support Link Service
- Policy Advice
- Information and Resource Service

What did AAWCH do in the past?

- Used research evidence to support need for change
- Sought endorsement from parents and professionals
- Raised the issue at the highest level
- Had a volunteer speaker program
- Invested in the AAWCH library to disseminate information...

Changing hospital environments

Psychosocial care of children and young people in hospital: national surveys in 1992 and 2004

- Paediatric units - declined by 30 per cent
- More co-location of children and adults
- Only 1 in 4 RNs in paediatric areas have appropriate postgraduate training
- Only 1 in 3 hospitals have preadmission programs, arrangements for children whose parents can't visit, or available play staff

Opportunities and actions

- Promote practical guidelines and strategies for hospitals to improve psychosocial care
- Provide education support and evaluation support to hospitals
- Work in partnership with hospitals providing links to support organisations
- Advocate for incorporating psychosocial issues as part of hospital accreditation

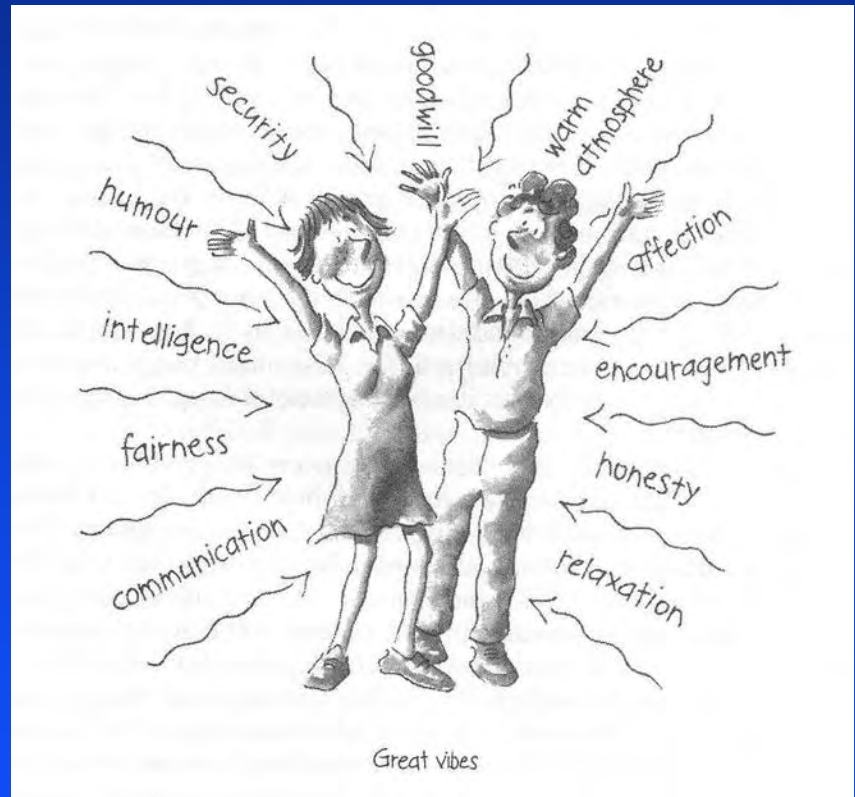
What can AAWCH do now?

Tell me and I'll forget; show me and I may not remember; involve me and I'll understand

- Change for the better will occur only through *local understanding*, support, involvement, action and pressure for change
- This depends upon people, leadership, and support *from the very top of organisations*

AAWCH's visions

An Australian culture where our Nation's children & young people are respected and cherished



AAWCH's visions

- Nationwide recognition for AAWCH as a voice for children and young people in the health system
- A high profile for psychosocial issues for children in health care settings
- Participation by children & young people in health-related decision-making

Some AAWCH strategies

- Establish a passionate Board with a clear agenda
- Update AAWCH's image ('fully sick') and increase visibility and impact
- Support parent Councils and groups
- Engage children and young people in voicing their needs
- Develop alliances and networks to advance shared goals

"When I see a child, I
feel two emotions:
tenderness for what she
is now, and awe for
what she might
become."

Louis Pasteur

