

PERADENIYA MEDICAL SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION *Newsletter*



JUNE 2024



Wesak lanterns at the Nelum Pokuna, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, made by the students of the Faculty.

Photo credit: Dr R. Prematilake, Batch 05/06.

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Recent PeMSAA organized events: PeMSAA Career Guidance Seminar 2024

In accordance with the Vision and Mission of PeMSAA, "To enable the faculty, its students and its alumni sail far and wide with the winds of change" PeMSAA organized a Career Guidance Seminar aimed at new graduates and young doctors. This was held as a webinar on the 30th of May 2024. Extending the scope of previous years, we decided to: 1) open the webinar to all those who were interested in participating from the different medical faculties in Sri Lanka, and 2) have a supplementary recorded session containing introductions to specialties and subspecialties not covered in the main seminar.



CAREER GUIDANCE SEMINAR 2024
Organised by PeMSAA
Join us online to listen to experienced trainers and recent trainees

Target Group: recent graduates & young doctors

DATE
Thursday 30th May 2024

TIME
6.30 PM ~ 8.30 PM

LINK
<https://learn.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0vdO2prTgrEtbi33VKOfnYJpqdRYXbjXJ6>

Register in advance using the zoom link!

Look out for the confirmation email!

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

- PG PROGRAMMES OF MAJOR SPECIALITIES
- REALITIES OF WORKING OVERSEAS
- "MUST-HAVE" LIFE SKILLS
- MANAGING FINANCES



CAREER GUIDANCE SEMINAR 2024
Organised by PeMSAA

PROGRAMME: 10 MINUTE MICRO SESSIONS ONLINE!

Moderated by
Dr Aanjeli Wimalasiri &
Dr.Gayana Amiyangoda

- Introduction - Prof. Heshan Jayaweera
- Medicine & subspecialties - Prof. Arjuna Medagama
- Surgery & subspecialties - Dr. Buddhika Dassanayake
- Gyn & Obs & subspecialties - Prof. Chathura Rathnayake
- Paediatrics & subspecialties - Prof. Heshan Jayaweera
- Psychiatry & subspecialties - Dr. Sayuri Perera
- Anaesthesia & Emergency Medicine - Prof. Vasanthi Pinto
- Family Medicine - Prof. Shyamalee Samaranyaka
- A career in academics and research - Dr. Kaiana Maduwage
- Realities of working overseas: UK - Dr. Ashan Gunarathne
- Realities of working overseas: Australia - Dr. Dananjaya Dissanayake
- Making decisions in the next few years - Dr. Buddhika Alahakoon
- Doctor as a responsible citizen - Dr. Saman Walisinghe
- Confidence building and Social etiquette - Dr. Aanjeli Wimalasiri
- Open discussion

Await many other MD/ MSc programme briefings on PeMSAA YouTube Channel !!

Thursday, 30th May 2024 at 6.30 PM on Zoom!
Register in advance :
<https://learn.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0vdO2prTgrEtbi33VKOfnYJpqdRYXbjXJ6>

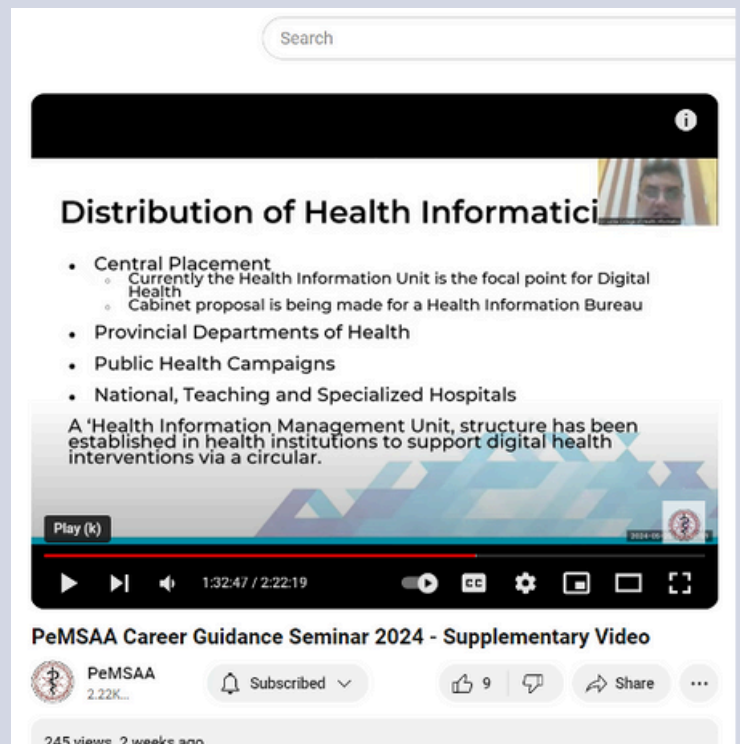
Preparations started in early May, with resource persons being identified from alumni as well as external experts, veteran postgraduate trainers, young consultants, as well as post MD trainees. The main session covered the five base specialties along with specialties of current interest for new graduates, introductions to the realities of working overseas, and sessions on life skills, decision making and necessary soft skills for the coming years. The supplementary recorded video contained introductions to 11 more specialties.

Recent PeMSAA organized events: PeMSAA Career Guidance Seminar 2024



The organizing team including the President of PeMSAA, Prof Heshan Jayaweera, our two moderators Dr Aanjeli Wimalasiri (Consultant Paediatrician, Department of Paediatrics) and Dr Gayana Amiyangoda (Consultant Endocrinologist, Department of Pharmacology), and IT, video and programme-master Dr Ruwan Prematilake (Senior Lecturer, Department of Biochemistry), worked tirelessly, with great efficiency and precision to ensure that everything went flawlessly.

The team was ably supported by Ms Ruwani Wehigaldeniya, Ms Sachini Palliyaguru and Ms Waruni Tennakoon, temporary staff of the Faculty who volunteered their very efficient and committed help on the day.

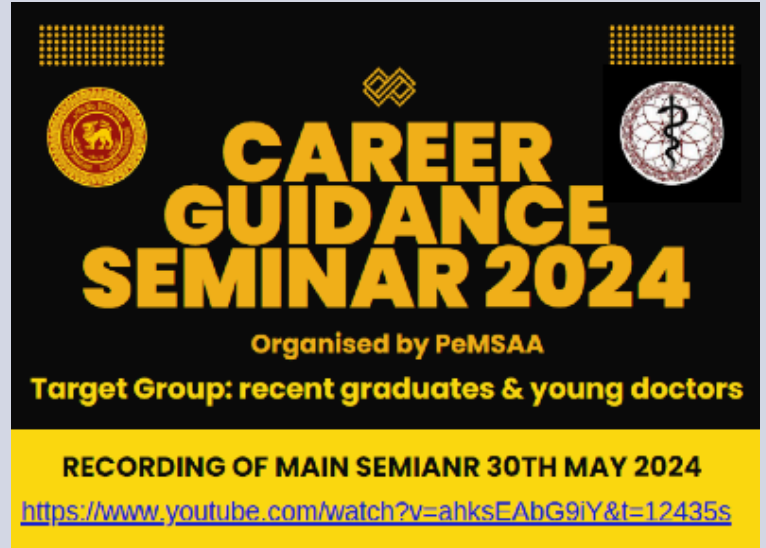


Recent PeMSAA organized events: PeMSAA Career Guidance Seminar 2024



A total of 522 registered for the live seminar with over 320 participating. A feedback poll taken just prior to the last segment showed participants from nine faculties of medicine in SL, with many expressing gratitude for opening this session to everyone.

All questions raised (36) in the Q & A panel were ably answered by the live resource persons, who were kind enough to stay online and answer questions as the session went on, and the moderators; and the team including Prof. Heshan Jayaweera, and Dr Chathurika Dandeniya, who were present throughout the session, also contributed to the discussion.



The recorded main seminar, as well as the edited supplementary session videos were uploaded to the PeMSAA YouTube channel and have had over 600 views since upload.

This is a program that has truly reached the whole country, and our sincere thanks go to all the resource people, some who joined in live, others who sent in recorded presentations, without whom this seminar would not have been possible.

Champa N. Ratnatunga
Programme Coordinator

Effect of excess digital screen exposure on language development in a young child

Introduction

With the advances in technology, digital devices have become a common item of a child's immediate environment. Exposure of a child from a younger age to digital screens impart negative effects on his/her behavior, and reduces social skills, attention span and development. The current article focuses on effects of digital screen exposure on speech and language development in young children.

Digital screen exposure

Digital screen exposure is defined as exposure of a child to different digital media devices such as the television, entertainment gadgets, work devices (Laptops/ Desk tops), multifunction devices (smart phones) and electronic books. In most families, both parents are working parents which result in the child being looked after by grand parents or a helper, and the digital screen acts as a reliable aide in keeping the child occupied and allowing the caretaker more freedom for their own activities. The lockdown period following the COVID-19 outbreak further strengthened the attraction between the child and digital devices.

Language disorders

Language disorders are categorized as difficulties expressed in responding to language, understanding words or sentences, learning new words and building vocabulary. These disorders are primarily of two types:

- Receptive language disorders where the child has difficulty in comprehension of speech and sounds in forming a language
- Expressive language disorders where the child understands the concepts of language but has difficulty expressing his ideas into words and phrases

Language disorders can exist as an isolated development disorder or co-exist with another development and behaviour related disorder such as autism spectrum disorder or attention deficit hyperactive disorder.

Effect of excess digital screen exposure on language development in a young child

Digital screen exposure and language disorders

With increasing use of digital media especially by young children, a significant rise in language disorders has been reported from research conducted around the world. Four important factors have been identified which result in digital screen exposure related language disorders.

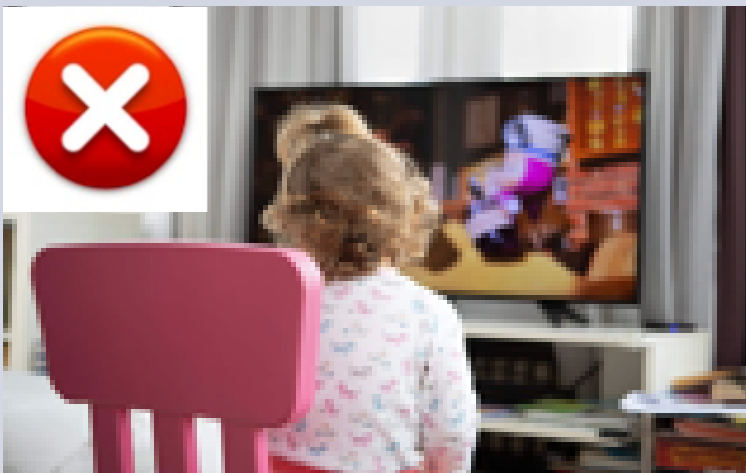
1. Age at which the child is exposed to digital screens

The most critical period of language development is the first two years of life. One study has revealed that children below one year of age who watch the television for more than 2 hours a day are six times more prone to develop language disorders and score low in communication assessment tools.

2. Duration of screen time

There are recommended durations of screen time for different age groups. Exposure beyond these limits can create negative effects on language development. The World Health Organization has recommended the following guidelines on digital screen exposure.

- Age – 0-2 years: NO screen time except video chatting with an adult. Half an hour of educational material with the presence of an adult after 18 months.
- Age – 2-5 years: No more than one hour of non-educational material.



Effect of excess digital screen exposure on language development in a young child

3. The content which the child watches

Certain factors of a digital program can have positive or negative effects on a child's development. The speed, the color, motions and factual nature of the program are some common areas highlighted. Fast paced programs with scenes of less than four seconds each should be avoided. Digital programs saturated with primary colours are harmful to the young brain, while scenes with only one or two primary colours have soothing effects. A good program, especially cartoons, should avoid unrealistic motion effects of humans or objects as it can cause mesmerizing effects on a young child. Finally, age-appropriate educational programs are always superior to fictional programs for young children, as they have difficulty in differentiating between the real world and the digital world.

Excess fidgety and rocking movements during screen time, zombie like interaction with the screen, temper tantrums, reduced attention span and lack of eye contact indicates that the program the child watches is hyper-stimulative and non-educational.

4. The mode of digital screen use

Finally, it is important to expose a young child to digital media with an adult co-viewer as much as possible. The co-viewer should play an active role in selecting appropriate programs, explaining and allowing the child to interact with content of the program while maintaining human-to-human interactions and facilitating the child to be creative during the screen exposure period. It is postulated that very young children exposed to a lot of screen time may have difficulty differentiating between the 'digital' and the 'real' world, and hence limiting exposure, and having interactions with an adult during screen time may help the child in this regard.

With the expansion seen in the digital world, avoidance of screens for young children will not be practically feasible. Therefore, it is high time for medical practitioners as well as parents to be aware of how to choose the correct content, the correct timing and how to provide a stimulatory environment to negate the harmful effects generated by the digital screens.

Prof Pathum Dissanayake

MBBS, DCH, MD

Professor in Paediatrics

Department of Paediatrics, FOM

University of Peradeniya

1995/1996 Batch



Annual Cricket Encounter: PeMSAA versus CoMSAA 2024

The annual cricket encounter between the Peradeniya Medical School Alumni team and the Colombo Medical School Alumni team took place on the 11th of May 2024, in Colombo – where the PeMSAA team achieved a victory of 30 runs.

Winning the toss, the PeMSAA team batted first and scored 160 runs for 8 wickets in the 35 overs match. Dr Udesh Jayasundara (09 batch), Dr Lahiru Amarasekara (09 batch) and Dr Weditha Ranasinghe (09 batch) were the top scorers scoring 31, 29 and 28 runs respectively.

In return the CoMSAA team gave a spirited fight, and played very well. The CoMSAA team were all out for 131 in 33.2 overs. Thrilling bowling performances by Dr Amila Maduragoda (00 batch), right arm off spinner (7 overs 3 wickets for 21 runs) and Dr Jeewan Samarasena (08 batch), right arm fast bowler (5.2 overs 3 wickets for 18 runs), together with excellent fielding of the side drew the PeMSAA team to victory against the strong CoMSAA team.

The PeMSAA team was captained by Dr Rasitha Manatunga (94/95 batch), and Dr Amila Kodikara (03/04 batch) was vice-captain. Dr Udesh Jayasundara was awarded best batsman, and the award of best bowler was given to Dr Amila Maduragoda. Dr Weditha Ranasingha was chosen as best fielder. Dr Jeewan Smarasena won the man of match title, in consideration of his contribution to victory by both bat and ball.



Annual Cricket Encounter: PEMSAA versus COMSAA 2024



The match was followed by a cricket night organized by the Colombo Medical Faculty, in their faculty premises. The Peradeniya Alumni team and the Peradeniya medical students team were invited to this colorful event. Prof Vajira Dissanayake, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Colombo, Emeritus Professor Sanath Lamabadusuriya, former president of COMSAA, Prof Indika Karunathilaka, Prof Chaturanga Ranasinghe and many more academic staff of the medical faculty of Colombo also attended the event.

Mr Anusha Samaranayake, a former national cricketer and the bowling coach of the national team, graced the event as the chief guest.

The cricket big match, between medical students of Peradeniya and Colombo universities was commenced in 2008 and it is an annual encounter organized in turns by two faculties.



PeMSAA Congress 2024



**21st & 22nd
November**

- Inauguration - 21st Thursday Evening
- Scientific Sessions - 22nd Friday

Please reserve the
dates on your
calendar!



Further details will follow

Kandy, Sri Lanka

www.pemsaa.org

pemsaa.temp@gmail.com

Donations to the PeMSAA Students' Crisis Fund

The PeMSAA Student Crisis Fund was established to help undergraduate students at the Faculty of Medicine, Peradeniya, in the event of an acute personal crisis such as serious personal health problems, serious health problems of parents or guardians including sudden death or permanent disability or loss of houses due to natural disasters, and other similar situations. We welcome donations, either as one-off donations or as regular monthly sums to the fund. We sincerely hope our alumni will generously donate to this cause, remembering how difficult life could sometimes be during undergraduate years. The details of the fund are as follows.

Name of account: 'PeMSAA Student Crisis Fund',

Account number: 87997354, Bank name: Bank of Ceylon

Bank branch: Super Grade Branch Peradeniya, Swift code: BCEYLK LX.

Men's Tie

Rs. Rs. 2000

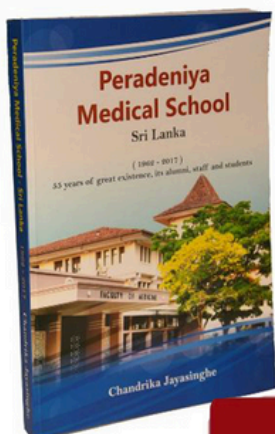
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with the logo in
yellow



*50th Anniversary
Commemorative
Volume*

Rs. 2000



Rs. 2000



Coffee Mug

Rs. 400

