

## **Meet Pragathi Tummala from the USA Executive Director at ISPCAN**



**Discipline, Organization, and Title:** Public health , Exec Director, ISPCAN

**Country or Countries you work in:** USA Based- global organization

### ***What inspires you when you are working to keep going despite the challenges?***

Children who are helpless and who are mistreated, harmed and robbed of a normal, happy childhood that everyone deserves make me want to work harder. It really makes me sad that children pay the price for this when they have done nothing wrong. Children are precious, and born so full of unconditional love. When that light is dampened by harmful people around them and they are have no way of fighting back, I am angry at this injustice and want to be part of a solution to end violence. I believe each of us has the power to change the world. And in my current role I want to support the men and women who help provide direct services or do research to bring better services to children who are abused and neglected.

### ***Is there a win or a case with an abused or neglected child that sticks with you that can generally share and how you played a role?***

I do not directly work with abused children in my job now, but the images that are burned in my heart are those of neglected children all over the world that wash up on the shores, that are treated like garbage and enslaved in marriage before they are even 16. One little boy I worked with when I volunteered with Big Brothers / Big Sisters organization out of college in the ghettos of Chicago, was a 6 year old boy named Juan. His father was in jail, and his mother was an alcoholic. He would dress himself and board a bus at 6am on Saturday just to come play with me and have someone who cared to spend time with him. He would look at me with these eyes that were so desperate for love and attention. I will never forget him.

### ***What has been your favorite ISPCAN Conference?*** Dubai 2017

### ***What are some ways that you handle the stress of working in the field of child welfare?***

Hug my 3 children, drive with the windows open singing along to my favorite songs, and walking my dog. I also take pride in the good work ISPCAN does to be part of the solution to end violence against children and feel grateful that I can be part of an organization every day that has such an important mission.

### ***Where in the world would you wish to go next with ISPCAN if you could choose?*** Indonesia



## **Meet Alon Yulevich from Israel**

### **Domestic Violence Prevention Committee**

**Discipline, Organization, and Title:** Senior Pediatric Surgeon, Expert on Child Abuse and Neglect. Head of the "Domestic Violence Prevention Committee" GALIL MEDICAL CENTER. Lecturer (Pediatric Surgery, Anatomy, Child Abuse & Neglect), Faculty of Medicine, Bar-Ilan University. Pediatric specialist at "Beit Lynn", Child Protection Center. MD

**Country or Countries you work in:** Israel

#### ***What inspires you when you are working to keep going despite the challenges?***

The helping of children, those are so dependable and weak at an adult-prone society. When you succeed in helping a neglected & abused child you give him full lifespan ahead! The work is indeed very hard and challenging, in our adult society. In Israel, all physicians who work in that field are pediatricians, pediatric surgeons or gynecology experts; and all of us are doing that work voluntarily. Understanding the severity of child abuse & neglect problem in Israel is in delay comparing to the group of developed countries, and there is much more to be done in that field.

***Is there a win or a case with an abused or neglected child that sticks with you that you can generally share and how you played a role?***

On 2004 a 4 months old baby arrived to the emergency room at the "Galil Medical Center – Nahariya" with unexplained apathy. After careful examination by a pediatrician, because his fontanelle seemed slightly full he was sent for fundus examination before lumbar puncture. Bilateral retinal hemorrhage was confirmed by Pediatric Ophthalmology Specialist in both eyes. Blood tests, including coagulation tests, were unremarkable except for anemia. I was called for consultation and thought of "shaken baby syndrome" diagnosis, which was confirmed after brain CT showing diffuse brain hematomas and contusions at different ages. No head trauma was found.

Parents were attorneys, the baby was their first child, and the talk with them about the problem was difficult. They did not accept the diagnosis and demanded on going to a larger hospital. After direct talk between all staff members (social workers, nurses and doctors) the baby was transferred to the Pediatric Neurosurgery department at a large hospital in Tel-Aviv. I still remember my talks with the head of that department. He was not aware that bilateral retinal hemorrhage in such an infant is pathognomonic. After 2 days he called me back, after examining the infant and reading the literature, to tell me I was right.

Only fifteen years ago even highly specialized doctors were unaware to that diagnosis! The baby was treated well by the health and social system, stayed with his parents, and developed well.

***What has been your favorite ISPCAN conference?*** Haven't been in one yet

***What are some ways that you handle the stress of working in the field of Child Welfare?*** Special group meetings of the staff at the "Child Protection Centre" with a psychologist, focused on that problem.

***Where in the world would you wish to go next with ISPCAN if you could choose?*** Singapore