

24th of June 2019

PRESS RELEASE

Press Conference: 24th of June 2019, 11:30 am, at the Ministry of Health

**«Living with Technology, Children's Health Remains their Inexplicable Right
and our Own Obligation»**



The Campaign is under the auspices of the Honourable Minister of Health, Mr. Constantinos Ioannou, who was represented extraordinary by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health, Mrs. Christina Yiannaki, who declared the opening of the campaign.

The 2019 campaign of the Cyprus Committee on Environment and Children's Health (CNCECH), is done in collaboration with the Office of the Commissioner of Environment and the Press and Information Office, and the participation of the Archbishop Makarios III Hospital.

"Exploiting Technology while Safeguarding the Children's Health - Addressing Technology Abuse and Addiction".

In her welcome address, the President of the Cyprus Committee, Dr. Stella Canna Michaelidou said that the issue of EMF/RF is a very serious and universal Public Health Problem, as it affects the whole population. On the basis of the Scientific Evidence and the Precautionary Principle, the matter needs to be and can be

addressed directly, by reducing active / passive exposure and technology abuse. The basic tool for achieving the goal is raising risk awareness. Because ignorance of the risk, advertisements and misinformation cause an extreme enthusiasm and growing children's dependence on devices and applications. Potential negative impacts of the immediate and long-term use of those devices by children has never been adequately evaluated in terms of safety for their mental and physical development. The President also emphasized the need for the controlled and age-related optimal exploitation of technology as a TOOL, AND NOT SUBSTITUTIONAL TO HUMAN RELATIONS AND SUBSTANCIAL EDUCATION. Even if the risks are not yet universally accepted by a limited number of scientists, considering their seriousness and the existing scientific evidence, we are not entitled to exposing our children to them, practically turning them into experimental animals.

In his address, the Minister of Health expressed his full support for the work of the Committee and stressed that "the Ministry of Health recognizes that the results of research on the health effect of the **electronic cloud** (*i.e. from EMF/RF*) and other negative environmental phenomena are **no longer considered as hypotheses**. **But these are rather scientific evidence demonstrating the harmful effects of human exposure to an altered natural environment on physical, spiritual and mental human health**". He also added that the Ministry, "recognizing the role and importance of the Committee, provides substantial support to its actions, while at the same time is **taking advantage/exploiting the expertise of the members of the Committee, in targeting and shaping policies and actions that contribute towards the protection of children's health**". He continued by stating that "**on the basis of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Nicosia Declaration 2017 of the Cyprus Medical Association, the Vienna/Austrian Medical Chambers and the Cyprus National Committee on Environment and Children's Health, and other relevant decisions taken at European and international level, our efforts/action will focus to limit as far as possible the unreasonable use of electronic means of communication and its consequences**".

He also stated that the Ministry of Health "**is currently promoting the request for the institutionalization of the Committee**, thus broadening its potential to secure grants from European and other funds and to develop research on issues and actions within its mandate".

In her address, the Commissioner of Environment, Mrs. Ioanna Panayiotou, in agreement with the aforementioned, stressed that "there is an urgent need to inform and raise awareness about the need to drastically reduce the use and exposure of children and embryos to radiation. Especially at home and at school where children spend at least 60-90% of their time - depending on their age". Therefore, by adopting all the data in relation to the existing documentation, the Office of the Commissioner of Environment actively supports the campaign with the aim of implementing the Precautionary Principle.

In his address, the Executive Director of the Archbishop Makarios III Hospital (NAM III), Dr. Andreas Neophytou, said that NAM III participates in the Campaign with the internationally pioneering project: **"WE ARE REDUCING DIRECT AND PASSIVE EXPOSURE OF CHILDREN TO NON-IONISING RADIATION - WE PROTECT THE CHILDREN"**, which is coordinated by Dr. Michaelidou.

He pointed out that the pilot project indicated among other things that the use of Wi-Fi at the Pediatric Intensive Therapy Unit (PITU) creates levels of continuous and uninterrupted passive as well as significant active exposure at levels much higher than biologically-based safety criteria. After dismantling (disconnecting) Wi-Fi from the PITU, and providing wired connection (via Ethernet), the exposure levels dramatically dropped to safe and well below these biological limits. As pointed out, wired internet connection should be the only acceptable solution within a hospital. The avoidance of carrying and using mobile phones, especially "smart" phones, by parents and staff in children chambers, is the second most important and essential factor for reducing exposure. He also referred to the excellent conditions in term of exposure levels at the Neonates Unit (where there is no Wi-Fi signal close to chambers), as well as the intention to extend the Project and the promotion of NAM III into an International Pioneer / Model Children's Hospital, with reduced exposure to a - among others - possibly carcinogenic and neurotoxic agent. Lastly, he stressed that "at NAM III two basic factors ensure the applicability of the Project and its extension to more Units: A) The existing excellent system of wired networks throughout the Hospital and B) The limited exposure to radiation from external sources i.e. antennas/ base stations".

Dr. Stella Canna Michaelidou then made a presentation on the most recent (by 2019) scientific data focusing on the effects on children. She also presented means to protect them, as promoted by the ongoing Campaign 2019. As she mentioned in her presentation, the scientific evidence on the potential effects of Electromagnetic Fields/Radiofrequencies (EMF/RF) and those of addiction is strong enough and overturns the arbitrary and non-scientifically proved Assumptions that EMF/RF can only cause tissue heating and is safe. Current limits,

which are NOT ADEQUATE OR SAFETY LIMITS, are based on these assumptions. The assumption that radiation does not affect DNA, because this radiation does not cause ionization, is also wrong. 90% of reliable research papers have shown that EMF/RF damages DNA via other mechanisms, mainly the radiation driven mechanisms of free radicals and oxidative stress. Brain DNA is especially vulnerable. The onset of central nervous system cancer comprises one of the currently sufficiently documented and very serious/irreversible effects. In 2011, the IARC / WHO, rated the 30KHz-300GHz radiation (emitted by Wi-Fi, mobile data, antennas, mobiles, wireless baby monitors, etc), as possibly carcinogenic 2B, placing it in the same category as exhaust gas and DDT. Today, recent research has almost completed the puzzle of documentation, indicating that it could be rather classified as carcinogen class 1.

Documentation about the impact on the development of the brain, the nervous system, and other neuropsychological effects on the fetus and child has exceeded 70% of an absolute evidence, while the effects on the reproductive system, the reduction of fertility and the effects on sperm are documented in 18 reviews of dozens of reliable studies. Behavioral problems, early dementia onset and Alzheimer's are sufficiently documented, while addiction and dependence are undeniably documented.

Overall, children are more affected, both short and long-term, because as growing organisms are more vulnerable and as it has been proved, absorb far more radiation, i.e. 10-fold in the brain bone marrow relative to an adult. She referred to evidence of the damaging effects of Wi-Fi, especially on DNA, the reproductive system, the brain, etc, that has been reported in a review of 100 peer reviewed scientific papers. The most intense exposure is at the time and point of use (i.e. device) and is a great active exposure for the user and great passive exposure for those nearby. The same and to a greater extent applies when connecting to the internet via i.e. 4G. Therefore, based on the Council of Europe (1815/2011) and other International Bodies and Medical Organizations, in schools, at home and in pediatric units only wired SAFE Internet connection should be used. In conclusion, it has been stressed that the use and dependence of children on devices, games and applications of which the immediate and long-term use has never been adequately controlled for safety in terms of the children's mental and physical development, should be avoided. Tablets, mobiles phones, etc, should not be given to preschool children - up until primary school, unless they are in flight mode and with the Wi-Fi disconnected. Independent validated research proves that it can

cause problems to normal physical, mental and emotional development, and impose the need for the implementation of Appropriate and Age-Related optimal exploitation of technology. At the end, the CNCECH submitted the following suggestions:

1. Prohibition of the use of Wi-Fi and other wireless connections, and mobile phones/tablets in kindergartens, playgrounds and schools, up to the Gymnasium, according to the French model. Teachers' awareness, education and active engagement of students using the Committee's videos and other material.
2. **Assessment** of the exposure of children to devices and facilities to be done on the basis of scientifically proven "guideline" biological SAFETY criteria.
3. Ensuring **parents' right to know** and have a say in the installation / use of wireless connections / devices at places where their children are hosted or educated.
4. **Continuous provision of information about the risks and precautions to the public.**
5. **Training of Health Professionals and Teachers.**
6. **Wi-Fi Removal - Wired Internet Promotion to Pediatric Units and a ban on the use of mobile phones in hospitals.**

Children have the right to health and we have the obligation to preserve it!



2019 Leaflet 2019 - [find it here](#)



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