

'The Child is the Foundation'

INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

IRAN DAILY: What inspired you to create TV programs for children?

VATANPOUR: After working and performing for children for over two decades, I felt a sense of duty and responsibility to make programs specifically for them. My experience and understanding of children led me naturally towards this path.

How has working with children personally impacted you?

It has certainly had an impact on me. I have gained empathy for my colleagues and witnessed the challenges they face. Today's chil-

dren are more complex than previous generations due to their exposure to new technologies. This has made the task of creating programs for them even more challenging than it was before.

What influence do the media have on children?

V: After the family, the media have the most significant impact on children. This, in turn, elevates the level of responsibility for those involved in creating programs for children. In today's world, competing with international TV channels is not an easy task.

How crucial is it to create TV programs specifically aimed at

children?

It is incredibly important because the child is the foundation. The essence and identity of individuals is rooted in their early years. It is a sensitive age, and we must approach it with great care, understanding that we walk a fine line. We should not only present them with positive aspects of life, but also address the darker and negative aspects, using concrete examples that children can comprehend.

Finally, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all children on their special day. I wish them endless motivation throughout their lives and remind them that happiness and smiles are their inherent rights.

In an exclusive interview with Iran Daily, Maryam Vatanpour, a renowned Iranian actress and TV personality, discusses the significance of children on Children's Day. For over two decades, she has dedicated herself to enriching the lives of children. Vatanpour gained widespread recognition through her breakthrough role in the mid-2000s TV series 'Dandelion,' captivating audiences and becoming a household name among children. Currently, she directs the beloved Khale TV series 'Rainbow.'



Sanctions endanger well-being of Iranian kids



By Yeganeh Kiani
Staff writer

Western sanctions against Iran have had negative humanitarian impacts on the Iranian society as a whole, especially its children. Above all, Iranian children's right to health has been adversely impacted by the cruel sanctions. Unfortunately, the lives of hundreds of Iranian children might be cut short as a result of a lack of access to medications. Contrary to US claims that sanctions are "smart" and do not hinder the trade of humanitarian goods, such

as medication and food, the global corporations refrain from selling medication or medical equipment to Iran as a result of those sanctions.

In fact, Iranian children have long been victims of the economic war waged mainly by the US. Washington's sanctions, especially, have made it impossible for Iranian importers, even from the private sector, to supply medication and medical equipment to citizens.

Hundreds of Iranian children with mucopolysaccharidosis, whose medications cannot be supplied domestically, are exposed to severe health risks, even

death. Mucopolysaccharidoses are a group of inherited metabolic diseases caused by the absence or malfunctioning of certain enzymes the body needs to break down molecules called glycosaminoglycans. Children with epidermolysis bullosa (EB), also known as butterfly kids, hemophiliacs, and children born with HIV are among the most affected vulnerable groups. The only relief EB patients receive on a daily basis is through specialized foam dressings that reduce and protect blisters. The most effective dressings are produced by the Swedish pharmaceutical company Mölnlycke, and are used by

EB patients worldwide. But for the butterfly children of Iran, where an estimated 800 to 1,200 patients live with EB at any given time, access to Mölnlycke supplies over the last two years has been next to

impossible.

Therefore, under the inhumane sanctions regime, Iranians, especially Iranian children, are excluded from medications that are readily accessible to other people in the world.



Children's Week through legal lens



By Hamed Sedaqi
Lawyer & legal advisor

EXCLUSIVE

Our country celebrates its national Children's Week from October 7 to October 13, with the official slogan for this year being "Better Childhood, Better Life." Each day of this special week holds its own significance and aims to

promote specific issues regarding children. Let's explore each day from a legal standpoint.

October 7 is designated as 'Child, Peace, Security, Environment.' Peace and security are intertwined with the political and civil rights of children. On this day, we should all reflect on actions that bring peace and security for children in society. It is crucial to reduce violence, conflicts, and tensions for children

to experience a peaceful environment.

The environment is also linked to the third generation of human rights. In order for today's children to enjoy a thriving environment as they grow into adulthood, society must invest economically and raise awareness regarding environmental issues.

October 8 is allocated to 'Child, Life, Health, Growth.' This day addresses matters concerning a child's right

to health, including physical and mental well-being. Any society should prioritize investing in the physical and mental health of its children through measures such as vaccinations and comprehensive healthcare both within and outside of schools.

October 9 focuses on 'Child, Participation, Awareness, Prosperity.' These issues revolve around the political and civil rights of children. Participation and awareness are linked to a child's right to education and free access to information across various subjects. It is essential to provide children with inclusive educational opportunities that encourage their active participation, enabling them to grow wiser and more knowledgeable.

October 10 is dedicated to 'Child, Family, Identity, Non-discrimination.' This day emphasizes the rights of children within their families, including their right to privacy. Children should not face discrimination, even during family hardships. For instance, a

physically disabled child should not be treated differently within their own family.

October 11 highlights 'Child, Morality, Upbringing, Expediency.' Children should be provided with suitable environments for moral and spiritual education.

October 12 reflects on 'Child, Past, Present, Future.' On this day, we contemplate past challenges faced by children while prioritizing strategic planning for their present and future.

Lastly, October 13 is devoted to 'Child, Welfare, Well-being, Equal Access.' This day focuses on the economic rights of children. It is essential to consider the economic well-being and equal access to resources for all children, ensuring that no child is left behind.

Throughout Children's Week, it is crucial to address these issues from a legal perspective and work towards creating a society that safeguards the rights of its children.

Tehran has to be transformed to become child-friendly

By Ali Amiri
Staff writer

OPINION

Just a brief glance at Tehran, the thronged capital of Iran, presents us with a harsh reality: it is a city that falls short of being child-friendly. Some may argue that, as it is today, it's not even an adult-friendly city.

The fact of the matter is that Tehran has turned into a car-centric metropolis, displaying a distressing lack of consideration for its pedestrians, including the most vulnerable among them – children. The city's disregard for creating safe spaces for its youngest residents is a crystal clear indicator of an urgent need for change. In order to become a truly inclusive and livable city for all ages, especially children, Tehran should undoubtedly change in terms of urban planning.

Today, Tehran grapples with many challenges that render it unfavorable to live in, particularly for the youth. The city's notorious air pollution, coupled with its maddening noise pollution, underlines the long road that lies ahead in transforming it into a suitable city.

This uphill battle is specifically important for its children, whose delicate immune systems and formative mental and cognitive capabilities demand an environment that nurtures their growth and well-being.

Beyond the aforementioned problems, Tehran struggles with a multitude of pressing issues that exacerbate its unsuitability for children – and other residents alike. The prevalence of uneven sidewalks poses a constant threat to pedestrian safety, especially parents with strollers, who might give up on walking their children to the parks altogether, and turn to personal vehicles which would in turn add to the heavy traffic of the city. Such heavy traffic, paired with reckless driving habits, is another danger to many children, especially during their formative school years. Hours upon hours of their lives are wasted in heavy traffic, and they're constantly endangered due to drivers' disregard for safety.

Also, the scarcity of well-designed spaces specifically catered to children's needs further restricts their opportunities for play and socialization. On top of that, certain neighborhoods within Tehran are plagued by safety concerns, leaving parents and guardians deeply apprehensive about allowing children to explore their surroundings freely. Sadly, this is the Tehran we have today. We must urgently prioritize the well-being of its youngest inhabitants and take comprehensive steps toward creating a safer, more accessible, and child-friendly urban landscape.

