

There Are No Shelters

We are in the middle of the legislative season, and your Florida Chapter leaders are working hard to protect the interests of children in Florida. We are advocating for all children and protecting their right to be who they are and what they want to be. The Florida Chapter wants politicians out of the patient-physician relationship and let pediatricians decide based on sound science what is best for children. This is an uphill battle in the current environment, and we have to be on a war footing to protect our children.

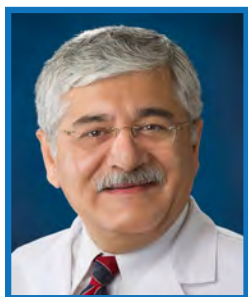
Advocacy is not just about persuasion; it has to be a passion. There are often no immediate rewards and usually no recognition. Thousands of people advocate for children without any regard for recognition. Pediatricians are the epitome of such advocacy. Yes, we have child advocates like Mona Hanna-Atisha who, when they saw injustice in Flint, take it upon themselves to advocate for children and families. No one asked Mona, but it was in her nature to advocate for children. We have many child advocates In Florida, like Louis St. Petry and Jeff Goldhagen, to name a couple. They are fearless and untiring in their advocacy for children. I wish I had half of their courage and tenacity. And then there is Dr. Gerold L. Schiebler who is a force of nature. He would work with anyone who would help him advance the cause of children. But then there are many other pediatricians who work for this cause even when it is downright controversial. No advocacy for safety and improvement of children's lives can ever be controversial, at least not in my mind.

One pediatrician I only learned about recently is Dr. Barbara Zind of Grand Junction, Colorado. What a phenomenal individual. I just don't have enough space to write about her, but you can find out more about her on this pbs link (<https://www.rmpbs.org/blogs/news/barbara-zind-colorado-doctor-gaza-israel/>). I never knew about her until I heard her interview on CNN. If you want to see a courageous woman watch this CNN clip (<https://www.cnn.com/videos/world/2023/10/10/barbara-zind-israel-hamas-gaza-ebf-vpx.cnn>). In the middle of a bombing, Wolf Blitzer asked her to go to a shelter and she said nonchalantly, "there are no shelters." That summed it up.

This mild-mannered woman physician has more courage than many people. It is inspiring to see the dedication of pediatricians like Dr. Barbara Zind and others who passionately advocate for children's rights.

No matter what you believe in, please continue to raise your voice for children all over the world. We need to set aside political views to prioritize humanity in advocating for children.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr aptly emphasized the interconnectedness of our actions and their impact on a global scale when he said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Rathore/MD". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

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