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BOOK REVIEW

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'Pediatric Education for Prehospital Professionals' – 2nd Edition

American Academy of Pediatrics, Ronald A Dieckmann (Ed),
Jones and Bartlett, 2006.

404 pages. ISBN 0-7637-2654-0 (Paperback) \$AUD62.15 (RRP) (Inc GST)

by

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During the 1990s the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) was influential in introducing educational courses and textbooks aimed at providing paramedics with the education, skills and confidence to effectively treat paediatric patients. The first edition of this textbook released by the AAP in 2000, provided paramedics with comprehensive assessment and management skills necessary in the treatment of critically injured and ill infants and children.

The first edition also covered many paediatric illnesses and injuries commonly presenting to paramedics in the field. Contents included chapters covering paediatric assessment; using a developmental approach; respiratory, cardiovascular and medical emergencies; trauma; toxic exposure; newborn delivery and stabilisation; children with special healthcare needs; SIDS and the death of a child; child maltreatment; medico-legal and ethical considerations.

Over recent years there have been advancements in prehospital care related science, research, and technology, resulting in this recently published second edition in which all content has been updated. The second edition continues the tradition of the first edition with an emphasis on family and child communication, accurate assessment, and up-to-date prehospital management of paediatric emergencies. All of these are presented via easy to follow case studies (with comprehensive answers supplied), quality colour photographs, diagrams, tables and charts.

Scattered throughout the chapters are interesting and useful 'tips' (helpful pointers), 'blips' (things to avoid), and 'controversies' in assessment and treatment. At the end of each chapter there is also a list of suggested readings including textbooks, and highly relevant research articles that encourage the already interested reader to explore further. The last section of the book provides clear and detailed instruction in BLS and ALS procedures ranging from oxygen delivery to advanced airway techniques, and spinal stabilisation. A paediatric

prehospital medication formulary is also included, though this may not be as useful for paramedics practicing outside of the United States, where paramedics should be guided by their own local protocols and guidelines.

New and useful content in the second edition includes chapters that discuss transport considerations; children in disasters, and the extended role of the paramedic in community education, injury and illness prevention and childhood health advocacy.

If there is one criticism I can make of the book, then it is in page layout and presentation. The photos, diagrams, and charts are all useful, but the formatting of some pages involves these being peppered throughout the columns of text, resulting in sensory overload. For some reason the publisher has also chosen to highlight key terms by underlining and printing them in red font. Unfortunately this leads to an interruption in the flow of reading, which for me, detracted from all the other good aspects of the book. Paramedics using the book should also keep in mind that the drugs, treatments, procedures and medico-legal aspects described in the book may vary outside US.

In summary, this second edition of '*Pediatric Education for Prehospital Professionals*' continues the tradition and success of the first edition in promoting high quality assessment and treatment of the paediatric patient. The book presents realistic case studies, flowcharts and step-by-step descriptions of the paediatric patient assessment process, together with clear explanations and guidelines for the management of common illnesses and injuries occurring in the children. The strength of this book is in its comprehensiveness, and up-to-date, informed content. The book itself models evidence-based paramedic practice, and the need to constantly evaluate and align our clinical practice guidelines with research findings. Every paramedic knows how challenging and stressful cases involving critically ill or injured infants and children can be. This book will provide most paramedics with the knowledge, skills and confidence to handle the majority of paediatric cases that they will encounter during their career.

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