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The role of pediatricians in supporting families throughout the adoption process

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According to the United Nations Population Division, around 260 000 children are adopted each year worldwide.[1] In Argentina, there are around 400 adoptions per year and a similar number of foster placements for adoption purposes.[2]

Adoption is a comprehensive protective measure designed to guarantee the right of children and adolescents to live and develop in a family that provides them with the care necessary to meet their emotional and material needs, when it is determined that their family of origin cannot do so. Specifically, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) addresses adoption with the aim of protecting the rights of children and adolescents, placing their best interests at its core.[3] However, this process faces multiple challenges that can directly impact child welfare.

In this context, pediatricians play a key role in advising and supporting families as they build their families. Their involvement includes a comprehensive, ongoing clinical approach that respects children and adolescents' prior history and their right to a healthy and fulfilling life.[4]

Pediatricians play a strategic role in providing comprehensive healthcare for these children, offering emotional support to families, and coordinating with interdisciplinary teams.

Recognizing the importance of this issue, the Sociedad Argentina de Pediatría, through its General Outpatient Pediatrics and Social Pediatrics committees, has produced a document with recommendations for the comprehensive pediatric care of adopted children.[5] This guide seeks to answer key questions about the regulatory framework of the adoption process, as well as to establish recommendations for the periodic health monitoring of children and adolescents and the support of families, from an interdisciplinary approach.

Having pediatricians who are adequately trained to deal with this very special situation ensures that each adoption process translates into an opportunity for a dignified and healthy life for children and adolescents. ■

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