

Message at the 13th International Conference on the MCH Handbook

August 24, 2022

Dear participants,

It is a great pleasure for me to participate online in the 13th International Conference on the Maternal and Child Health Handbook. I would like to express my deep respect to the Organizing Committee of the 13th International Conference on the MCH Handbook, the University of Toronto, the International Committee on the MCH Handbook, and everyone who has worked to realize this international conference.

MCH Handbooks play a very important role in helping pregnant women, nursing mothers, children and their families. In 2018, I participated in the 11th International Conference on the MCH Handbook held in Thailand. I have fond memories of the Thai MCH Handbook that I was shown at that time. And last year, I participated in the series of excellent webinars organized by the Local Organizing Committee of the 12th International Conference on the MCH Handbook in the Netherlands and learnt a great deal. I am grateful that I was able to help members of Boshi-Aiikukai, the organization of which I am President, to share some information from the webinars with mothers and families in Japan.

The theme of today's conference is "Making Me Visible". It is very important to identify and support vulnerable pregnant women, mothers, newborns and children, whose needs might not yet be visible. MCH handbooks help mothers and their families to communicate with healthcare professionals and volunteers who can listen to and support them. MCH handbooks can also empower women and their families to be the owners of their own health records, and to seek help for their health problems. I have been looking forward to today's conference, which will bring another opportunity for us to share valuable experiences, learn new ideas and hold discussions together.

I would like to convey my deep appreciation to all of you who have been utilizing MCH handbooks for the health of pregnant women, nursing mothers and their children. I hope that this conference will make a great contribution to helping pregnant women, nursing mothers, newborns, children and their families, so that every child will be able to grow up and play their role in building our future.

Thank you very much.