

# PROTECTING UNBORN LIFE

EARLY DIAGNOSIS AND PREVENTION OUT OF LOVE FOR THE CHILD



**Foundation for the Disabled Child**  
Prevention and early detection

## PROF. WOLFGANG HOLZGREVE

Medical Director and Chairman of the Executive Board of the University Hospital Bonn;  
Full Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology and former Head of the Department of Gynecology at the University Hospital Basel



## DEAR LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

The Foundation for the Child with Handicap was founded in 1967 in Bonn-Bad Godesberg, still under the heavy impression of the Talidomid (Thalidomide) catastrophe, which had made clear the vulnerability of the child development in the womb. Our goal is to promote measures for the prevention, early detection, and early treatment of physical and mental disabilities in childhood.

There will always be children with disabilities, which originate either before birth or during childhood e.g. due to genetic diseases or accidents. However, the state of a society is reflected in the way it treats children with disabilities. These have a right to our help and are often dependent on it.

„... No child may be treated differently on the basis of any characteristic, such as e.g. skin color, gender, ... national, ethnic or social origin, disability... shall be disadvantaged.“ is stated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Article 2 which we are committed to.

Children's rights represent an international obligation to shape state and social conditions accordingly so that the priority of the best interests of the child is binding. Please help us to raise awareness about preventable harm to the unborn child and the consequences for families, and to promote research in this area.

Support us in this important work with your donation.

Your

**PROF. WOLFGANG HOLZGREVE,  
MD, PHD, MBA#, FACOG (HON.), FRCOG (A.E.)**

Chairman of the Foundation for the Disabled Child



## KATJA DÖRNER

Mayor of the City of Bonn, Former Member of the Committee for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and Deputy Member of the Children's Commission of the German Parliament

„The Foundation for the Child with Handicap supports our joint efforts for an inclusive coexistence of people of all ages as in our city. As Mayor of Bonn, I am pleased to have assumed patronage of the Foundation's work.“

## THE FOUNDATION - PAST AND FUTURE

The Foundation for the Child with Handicap was founded at a time when the population in Germany and other countries was massively affected by the so-called thalidomide catastrophe. At the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, around 5,000 children were born in Germany alone with deformities of the limbs, the heart, and other organs as a result of their mothers' use of the drug.

The suffering of the handicapped children and their parents prompted some supporters of the Green Cross to set up a foundation to provide rapid and unbureaucratic assistance to the victims. However, the founders also entered new territory, and from the very beginning, measures were initiated to prevent such a catastrophe in the future by improving

the early detection and prevention of disabilities.

To this day, the promotion of measures for the prevention, early detection and early treatment of physical and mental disabilities in children is at the center of the foundation's tasks. In particular, the foundation is committed to raising awareness of the consequences of harmful genetic and environmental effects during pregnancy and childhood in children, e.g.

- Alcohol and tobacco consumption during pregnancy
- Obesity and diabetes during pregnancy
- Diagnosis and therapy of genetic diseases before and after birth



# PROTECTING THE DEVELOPING CHILD – SHOWING WAYS

Physical and mental disabilities are and remain a great burden for parents and children. They are either congenital or arise after birth, for example as a result of accidents. This makes it all the more important for the Foundation to exploit and further develop all the research and diagnostic possibilities available today. We see our central tasks in the

- Promoting early diagnostic examination and consultation centers and further medical training
- Informing and educating expectant parents and the general public.

- Creation of concrete support for those affected
- Stimulating scientific research and testing methods of early detection and treatment of prenatal damage and disabilities arising before or after birth or later on



apprenticeship

screenings

ear screenings for new born

research projects

research and education center for

infantile brain damage

private school for deaf and blind children

# PROVIDING HELP – OUR WORK FOR EXPECTANT PARENTS

Every day in Germany, more than 100 children are born with a permanent impairment of physical and mental health. The causes of these disabilities are hereditary changes, effects on the mother and child in the womb, and complications during pregnancy and birth.

Through genetic counseling or targeted preventive and early detection and increasingly treatment measures, many congenital disabilities can be prevented, decisively improved, or at least compensated for. Also, prevention is a cornerstone in the work of the Foundation for the Child with Handicap.

INFORMATION  
FOR EXPECTANT  
PARENTS



Poster campaign of the Foundation for the Disabled Child on the risks of alcohol and nicotine consumption during pregnancy.



Educational brochure for expectant parents on possible prenatal examinations.

INITIATIVES  
FOR EXPECTANT  
PARENTS

## PIONEERING INITIATIVES

The earlier childhood disabilities are detected, the better. For this reason, the Foundation has founded or supported numerous initiatives in the field of early detection and treatment. Here are just a few representative examples:

- Establishment of an early diagnostic and early therapeutic treatment center.
- Introduction of general hearing screening for newborns
- Creation of a brochure on the growing possibilities of prenatal medicine
- Introduction of general screening for infants and young children and expansion of genetic counseling centers in Germany

Further detailed information on our work can be found at [www.stiftung-behindertes-kind.de](http://www.stiftung-behindertes-kind.de)

## CREATING AWARENESS – OUR MEDIA AWARD

MEDIA AWARD

The „Prevention in Pregnancy“ media prize is a long-established award for outstanding journalism and high-quality publications on the prevention, early detection and early treatment of childhood disabilities. It is endowed with **€ 3,000** annually for the prize winner and was established in 2011 to promote high-profile information on the topic. Each year, a single media work (print, TV, Internet etc.) is selected from among many applications for this highly regarded award.



## PROMOTING KNOWLEDGE – SCIENCE AND FURTHER EDUCATION

INITIATIVES  
FOR  
MEDICAL SKILLED  
WORKERS

Another concern of the Foundation is to advance research and to implement new methods of early diagnosis and early treatment of children with disabilities. This is necessary because work in this area is chronically underfunded, and dedicated scientists and researchers often do not receive sufficient support. In addition, through interdisciplinary knowledge exchange at symposia and through training measures, the Foundation ensures that new findings are also received and implemented by physicians and therapeutic staff. In December 2020, for example, a very lively online symposium was held on advances in non-invasive prenatal testing and gene therapy at the University Hospital Bonn, and the Proceedings of this Symposium will be made available to the public by a special issue of the Journal of Perinatal Medicine.

## NEW CHALLENGES – OUR FOCUS REMAINS

In the more than 50 years since the Foundation was established, the challenges have changed again and again.

Whereas smoking and alcohol consumption during pregnancy were still considered harmless in the 1960s, today a broad section of the population is aware of their dangers, partly as a result of the work of our Foundation. Today we have to face new problems. In addition to the increasing use of drugs by expectant mothers, maternal obesity during pregnancy are particular current problems. Obesity during pregnancy is a focus area of the Foundation, because it poses a danger to mother and child in several ways. We see our main task for the next few years as bringing this issue to the attention of the public and developing an effective prevention program.

Please support us in our  
manifold tasks for  
children with disabilities!

## HELP US SO THAT WE CAN HELP

The Foundation's funds are recruited exclusively from voluntary donations. Therefore, please donate, too, so that the foundation can continue its work effectively and for the benefit of parents and children.

Your donation helps us!

### ACCOUNT OF THE FOUNDATION FOR THE CHILD WITH HANDICAP:

Deutsche Apotheker- und Ärztebank

ACCOUNT 21 55 672

BANK CODE 300 60 60 1

BIC DAAEDEDXXX

IBAN DE 55 30 06 06 01 00 02 15 56 72

## CONTACT

### PETRA HINZ

Secretariat of the Foundation for  
the Disabled Child

Prof. Dr. med. Dr. h. c. mult.

### WOLFGANG HOLZGREVE, MBA

Chairman of the Board of the Foundation  
for the Disabled Child

Medical Director and Chairman of the  
Executive Board of Management University  
Hospital Bonn (UKB)

Venusberg-Campus 1

D - 53127 Bonn

Phone: +49(0)228/287-10901

Email: [stiftung.behindertes.kind@web.de](mailto:stiftung.behindertes.kind@web.de)

[www.stiftung-behindertes-kind.de](http://www.stiftung-behindertes-kind.de)

