

The main programme of the Conference on Youth and Ethics Education organised by the Sri Swami Madhavananda World Peace Council and the Youth Union of Yoga in Daily Life under the patronage of the Minister of Education, Josef Dobeš. The ceremonial opening was started on Friday evening with a cultural programme, where the Indian Ambassador D.P. Srivastava was also present.

The official opening of the Conference was held on December 4 in Prague was opened by Ing. Roman Fuksa, president of the Yoga in Daily Life Association, and Mgr. Lenka Schwarzová, ethics adviser to the Minister of Education.

Ms Schwarzová explained how important ethics is to Minister Dobeš and spoke about how the Ministry's new commission for ethics is operating. Afterwards children from all over the country gave short presentations with examples of how they are implementing ethics in their lives.

Then followed addresses of the keynote speakers:

PhDr. Petra Vrtbovská, PhD. explained how closely small children are connected to their parents and how much damage is caused to a child's psyche and even to the brain at the neurological level when the family is dysfunctional, when parents have wrong attitudes towards the child, or when a child loses its parents, etc.

Prof. Gabriel Švejda spoke on media literacy. After an excursion into the history of the media, he gave examples of our fascination with new media and the strong influence the media exerts on the human psyche. Then he warned of a new form of bullying that comes with Internet media.

Then the conference was greeted by high schoolers from New Zealand who sent a video interview about their opinions on ethics, produced specially for the conference.

Ing. Michaela Wicki spoke about the experience she has gained working with young adults in a half-way house. Her clients, she said, were socially deprived as children and have developed antisocial attitudes and values as a result. She went on to describe how they respond positively to long-term giving of understanding, discipline, and love.

Karel Nešpor, M.D., the well-known psychiatrist, spoke about drug and alcohol addiction, and gave examples of preventive programs for school children and exploring the role of yoga in addiction prevention and treatment.

His Holiness Mahamandaleshwar Paramhans Swami Maheshwarananda, initiator of the conference, wrapped up the conference with an appeal to focus on ethics in family life as well as in school education.

Afterwards, a group of elementary school children performed a short yoga exercise routine while reciting rhymes about how much they care about nature. They also invited the conference participants to the workshops which took place in the

afternoon, which highlighted good practices for implementing ethics in school curricula.