

# NOT JUST A COLD



*How Andrew saved  
the life of his baby  
sister because he  
knew the 'signs'.*

## NOT JUST A COLD

Come to my school. You may think it looks like other schools. You are wrong. It is a very special school. It is a Child-to-Child school. What is a Child-to-Child school? It is a school full of health workers.



There are six-year old health workers in class one. There are eight-year old health workers in class three. There are eleven-year old health workers in class six. Six-year old health workers can keep clean and show others how to do the same. Eight-year old health workers can also help brothers and sisters at home. Ten-year old health workers can also spread the ideas outside the school. They are all health workers

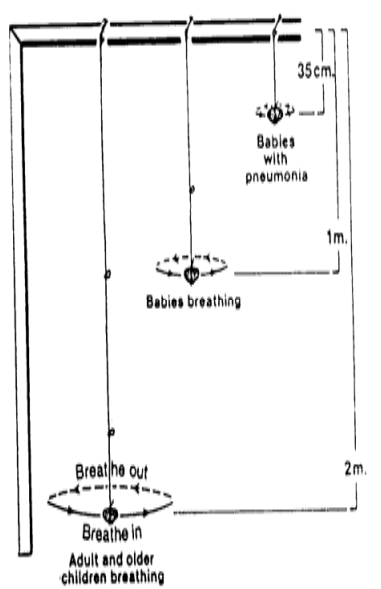
## NOTE FOR TEACHERS

Many other activities can be done after the story. Some are mentioned in the text. Other drawing and drama activities are obvious but here are three which all develop life skills:

- 1 Carry out a survey to find out how many people in school and at home can tell you the signs of pneumonia in babies young children (great tact needed here)
2. Retell the story from the health worker's point of view.
  3. Recount what happened when the parents came home and found out that their baby had been very ill, that Andrew had saved him and that all their neighbours thought him rude and ill disciplined

Source: Child-to-Child *Not Just a Cold* Harlow: Longman 1989 Original story Hugh Hawes ( Slightly abridged)

So now I, Andrew...the great...the proud...  
the life saver, will tell you the SIGNS again.  
If your baby has a nose which runs...  
and no bad cough and no fever – it has a cold.  
All babies get colds. Don't worry. If the baby has  
a runny nose and a cough – even if she feels  
a little hot it may still just be a bad cold –  
but watch very carefully. BUT IF YOUR BABY  
HAS A COLD AND A COUGH AND BREATHES  
QUICKLY, WHEN RESTING QUIETLY, ALL THE TIME  
– THEN THESE ARE THE SIGNS OF PNEUMONIA.  
TAKE THE BABY TO THE HEALTH WORKER QUICKLY:  
SHE NEEDS SPECIAL MEDICINE AT ONCE.



girls and boys together. They all have the power to help  
other children – to help other people.  
Sometimes they work together with their teachers to help  
the other people in towns and villages. They also help old  
people. They make plays. They sing songs. They sing  
about how to look after eyes and teeth. They make plays  
about how to immunise children. They help to make dirty  
places clean.

Sometimes they help each other. They help each other  
when one of them is sick or unhappy. Always, they help at  
home. They watch the young children and babies at  
home. They play with them. They keep them safe. They  
help them to eat good food. They help them to keep  
clean. They help them when they are sick. When the  
babies are ill, they tell their parents. They tell the health  
worker. All the children know where the health worker  
lives.

Look at me. I am Andrew. I am eleven. You think I look  
small. You think I do not look strong. You are wrong. I am

Andrew the health worker. I am Andrew the life saver. I am Andrew the great. I am Andrew the proud. Let me tell you why I am all these things.

I look after my baby sister Sara. Sometimes my baby sister cries. She cries and cries. Is she angry? Is she hungry? What is the matter? Sometimes nothing is the matter. Her nose is not running. She doesn't have a cough. She is not hot. I start talking to her. I play with her. In a few minutes she laughs and laughs.

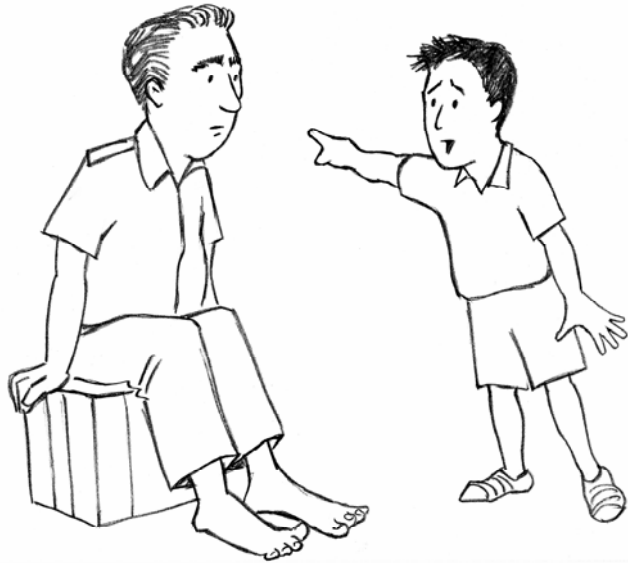
Sometimes my baby sister cries. She cries and cries. Her nose is running. She has a cough. I watch her when she's quiet. I count her breathing, it's not quick. She has a cold. In one year she has about three colds. I wipe her nose with a cloth. I sing to her. I play with her. She will get better

Sometimes my baby sister cries. She cries and cries. She is not angry. She is not hungry. Her nose is running. She has a cough. She feels a bit hot. I watch her very

The health worker went very quickly to his house. I ran after him. I ran and ran until I reached the house. The health worker was there already. His wife was holding the baby.

"This baby is very ill. She nearly died," he said. "She has Pneumonia. I have given her medicine. She will get better. Well done, Andrew. You remembered what I taught you at school. We counted quick breathing with my watch. We counted fifty breaths in a minute. We measured lengths of string and tied stones to them. We watched how some swung slower and some fasted. You all breathed at the same rate. You saw that the child was breathing too fast. You remembered the signs. You are a *life saver*. You did a *great* thing. I am *proud* of you." My sister did get better – she did not die because I, Andrew, knew the signs. When I grow up I will become a great doctor, a famous doctor. I will teach hundreds of health workers. The health workers will teach hundreds of children to know the signs.

chair. He had no shoes on. They were mending his shoes.



“My baby sister is ill,” I said – “she is breathing fast like this.” I made the noise like the baby’s breathing. “My baby is hot, my baby is coughing. I think my baby has Pneumonia. I know the signs. You came to the Child-to-Child school,” I said. “You taught us the signs. Come quickly. The baby is at your house.” The health worker jumped on his bicycle. “Keep my shoes,” he shouted. “I will come back.”

carefully. Her breathing is not quick. It is just another cold. She must play quietly. She must drink a lot. She must keep eating. She must sleep. She will get better soon, but I must watch her. I must watch her for the danger signs. If you do not know the danger signs your baby can die. Some other children do not know. Some parents do not know. Many babies die because people do not know the signs. They do not need to die. But I Andrew, I knew the **signs**. I saved my baby sister.

One day my little sister cried and cried. She wasn’t angry. She wasn’t hungry. Her nose was running. She had a cough. She was hot. She did not want to play. I gave her some clean water. She drank it. I gave her some food, but she did not want to eat it and she ate just a little. She cried, but she didn’t cry loudly.

She lay quietly. I watched her breathing. She was breathing very fast. She grunted with each breath. I counted the breaths one – two – three – four. They came

very fast. She was lying quietly but she went on breathing fast. I knew the **signs**. We had learnt them at school. My sister was very ill. She could have a killer disease. A disease called Pneumonia. (We learnt to pronounce it NU-MO-NI-A .Pneumonia kills thousands of children in our towns and villages every year. Pneumonia attacks fast like a robber with a gun. Babies with Pneumonia breathe very fast – at least 50 breaths every minute. Babies with Pneumonia must get medicine quickly. They must get it from the doctor or the health worker. If they do not get it soon they may die.

My sister was very ill, but my mother was away. My father was away. My older sister was away. They had gone to visit my aunt in the next village. I ran round the houses to find help. I went to Mrs Anna. Mrs Anna never went to school. She has no children. She does not know the signs. She said, “Wait until your mother and father get back. They will come back this evening – when they come Back they will know what to do.” I said, “No.” She shouted at me.

I went to Mr George. Mr George has children. He has been to school. But he does not know the signs. He said, “Children are always sick. They always get better. My child has a cold too. Listen to me, I am older. I know better.” I said, “No.” Mr George threw a stick at me.

I went to Mrs Paula. Mrs Paula is very kind. She knows the signs. But she did not do anything. She said, “Your baby is sick. My children are often sick. One of them died. We were unlucky. Some people are unlucky. Perhaps your child will die.” I said, “No. My baby sister will not die. I will find the health worker.” I ran back home. I took the baby in my arms and I ran. I ran to the clinic. The health worker was not there. I ran and ran. I came to the health worker’s house. His wife was there. He was not. “He has gone to the market,” she said.

I gave her the baby. “Look after this baby,” I said. “It is very sick.” I ran and ran until I came to the market. I ran from stall to stall. At last I found him. He was sitting on a