



Volume 2-Issue 2

"To be
Healthy
as a
Whole,
Mental
Wellness
Plays a
Role"

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THE COUNSELLING CENTRE NEWSLETTER

AUGUST, 2019

POCSO ACT 2012

One of India's most progressive laws

A survey that was conducted by the Women and Child Development (WCD) in 2007 showed that 53.22 % children reported having faced some form of sexual abuse in which 52.94% were boys and 47.06% girls. And about 69.0 % of children that were surveyed went through one or more forms of physical abuse.

Child sexual abuse is a widespread problem with seriously damaging life-long outcomes. Despite the gravity of the crime and the vulnerability of the victims both society and government skirted the issue and the problem remained ill-addressed due to deep-rooted cultural norms, social stigma, poor awareness, lack of child rights and inadequate laws.

Sexual offences against children were covered by three sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) not specific to children. The only crimes registered were rape (sexual intercourse without consent—Section 376), outraging the modesty of a woman (unspecified acts- Section

Let your child know that saying "NO" is okay and the right thing to do.

354) and unnatural sexual activity—Section 377). Further, the variations of sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation were not explicitly recognized as crimes and therefore went unpunished.

Therefore, **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act** of 2012 is one of India's progressive laws. It pays particular attention to dealing sensitively with the abuse victim/survivor.

Given that the child is at a disadvantage when faced with an adult manipulative perpetrator who is more powerful, the law supports in



multiple ways.

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ARE WE NURTURING THE HUMAN INTELLIGENCE ?

One day, sitting alone with his teacher in class, a student took the opportunity to speak his heart ...

"In the future, most careers will be automated and people who succeed will have to be more adaptive, curious and innovative!"

Surprised the teacher asked, "The point you are making is..?" "Sir, the focus in our educational system right now is more on regurgitating in-

formation and test taking." While being skeptically stared at by the teacher, the



student began to present his

facts.

"In today's world, creativity is the most important leadership skill. The research of 1500 corporate executives states 'Creativity is the number one leadership skill.' Google states - GPAs are no longer the only criteria for hiring.

Pretty soon people will not be hired for what they know, because what you've memorised is a fact;



we have got Google and Siri for that. In the future people will be hired for not what they know but what they can do with their knowledge. Can they creatively solve real world problems and not just follow instructions or directions and bubble-in multiple choice questions? These are robotic tasks and they can be done better by robots.

Billionaire founder Jack Ma of Alibaba once said **‘We should not compete with artificial intelligence but instead focus on developing unique human intelligence’.**

Drills are for teeth and not human mind, so do you think that these repetitive tests should not be the only training of this time?

Sir, if so, in the future there will be longer unemployable lines.”

He rested his case with much sorrow. “If the system continues to teach today like you taught yesterday, students are going to be robbed of a better tomorrow.”

Dear teachers and parents, I request you to pay heed, there are important lessons that our children need. Not just from books but also from class and the streets. You must have all heard

the saying ‘When the going gets tough, the tough gets going’, however its not true. The tough can easily fail, what we need is smart. When the going gets tough, the smart wins and for this we need to prepare our kids equally to handle success and failures, to be emotionally resilient and intelligent, social skills and problem solving are critical to their upbringing.

By Natasha Mehta
Counselling Psychologist



“PREVENT SUICIDE. SAVE LIFE.”



Dr Harish Shetty, addressing group of teachers from various schools across Mumbai.

On 6th September, 2018, the Counselling Centre conducted a workshop with the theme of suicide prevention: “Prevent Suicide. Save Life.” The workshop was educative, provided practical strategies and protocols to address and

act upon the red-flags. Teachers from various schools were in attendance for this full day workshop. Signs of suicide, common attitudes about suicide, myths and facts, building alliances, Acknowledge-Care-Tell and Question-Persuade-Refer models, Emergency Response Team, and holistic healing

formed the major content of the workshop. Senior Psychiatrist Dr. Harish Shetty and the Counselling Centre engaged in a very interactive Q and A which channelized teachers’ minds to think deeper and differently about suicide, what it looks and feels like, and how can it be prevented.



Ms Sonali Patankar conducting sessions with parents.

safety and responsibility with students and parents across various sections in school and college. The session focussed on the use of gadgets, online apps, games, minimum age criteria for various applica-

RESPONSIBLE NETISM

The team of Responsible Netism was invited to conduct sessions on online

tions etc. It also highlighted the various cyber-crimes, cyber laws and prevention and guidance for the responsible use of the internet.

It’s a well observed fact that today’s youth is being swept over by the internet era; awareness about the pros and cons of this was very necessary. A large number of students use the internet for academic/

entertainment purposes. It was important to help the young adult decipher between use and misuse of media. By creating awareness we hope to prevent abuse of internet, and promote guidelines for cyber safety.

JUST DIFFERENT: NOT BROKEN

Autism is a confusing word. Even to a psychologist. It says so many things, but still everything is different, isn't it? Because, can a word define a child? But we try to, don't we? The moment we hear the word Autism, there are specific ideas, behaviours that pop in our head, all of them which scream, "Sorry, can't handle". I would know... I may have said it too, despite being a mental health professional.

But what works? How can one be of any assistance to a person affected with autism? Along with typical plans and therapies, how about something that all of us (parent, teacher, principal, student, counsellor) can follow with just a slight bit of effort.

1. Acceptance: It is hard. To hear that your child has been diagnosed

with a lifelong condition. To have a student in your class who is screaming, and crying. To have a friend who cannot understand you and whom you fail to interact with. Despite that, once we accept that the behaviour is not on purpose, there is a genuine, scientifically proven condition which is making the person have difficulty in coping with stressors, most problems become solution focused. All you need here is a change in perspective.

2.Understanding: Forget the phrase “No two children with autism are the same”. Have you seen any 2 individuals who are same? Every child regardless of any condition is different and needs your compassion and understanding. Get to know the child; you will know

what he/she needs from you.

3.Modification : It's not just parenting, teaching methods, curriculum school set up that requires modifications. Modification needs to start mainly in our thoughts, attitudes, and expectations. A positive, warm, welcoming approach can make the most difficult of situations adaptable.

4. Hold Hands: You are not alone. None of us are. All children require holistic support and care and for children with Autism, just a little more of expert service. One doesn't always need to be a professional to help children with varied needs.

By Divya Nair
Clinical Psychologist

DEVELOPMENT IN TEENS

Growth and development in a child includes not only the physical changes that will occur from infancy to adolescence, but also changes in emotions, personality, behaviour and thinking that children develop as they begin to understand and interact with the world around them.

As children progress through a series of growth stages, they may encounter social and emotional challenges, and some relatively common problems during these years. Hence, supporting social and emotional development in pre-teens and adolescents becomes important to foster a child's growth.

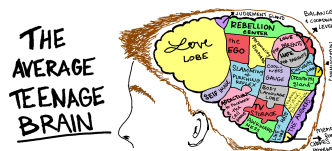
Here are some ideas to help to support the child's social and emotional development.

Be a role model

You can be a role model for positive relationships with friends, children, partner and colleagues. The child will learn from seeing relationships that have respect, empathy and positive ways of solving conflict.

Get to know the child's friends

Getting to know the child's friends and peer group will help to keep up with the child's social relationships. If



you're concerned about the child's friends, you might be able to guide him/her towards other social groups.

Listen to the child's feelings

Active listening can be a powerful way of strengthening your relationship with your child in these years. If you're in the middle of something, make time for when you can listen. Respect the child's feelings and try to understand his perspective, even if it's not the same as yours.

Be open about your feelings

Telling the child how you feel when she behaves in a certain way helps your child learn to read and respond to emotions. It also models positive and constructive ways of relating to other people.

Talk about relationships, attraction and intimacy

If you talk about relationships and intimacy in an open and non-judgmental way, it can promote trust between you and the child. When these moments come up, it's often good to find out what the child already knows. Correct any misinformation and provide the facts. Use the conversation as a chance to talk about appropriate behaviour and let the child know you're always available to talk about questions or concerns.

Focus on the positive

There might be times when you seem to disapprove of the child's behaviour or the child seems disinterested/moody. In these times, it helps to also encourage and reinforce the positive aspects of the child's social and emotional development.

By Nidhi Chheda
Clinical Psychologist

SALIENT FEATURES OF THE POCSO ACT

- The Act defines a child as any person below eighteen years of age, and regards the best of interests of the child as being of paramount importance at every stage, to ensure the healthy physical, emotional, intellectual and social development of the child.
- It defines different forms of sexual abuse, including penetrative and non-penetrative assault, as well as sexual harassment and pornography, and deems a sexual assault to be “aggravated” under certain circumstances.
- It deems a sexual assault to be “aggravated” under certain circumstances, such as when the abused child is mentally ill or when the abuse is committed by a person in a position of trust or authority vis-à-vis the child, like a family member, police officer, teacher, or doctor.
- People who traffic children for sexual purposes are also punishable under the provisions relating to abetment in the Act.
- The Act provides for the establishment of Special Courts for the trial of offences under the Act, with the intention of providing quick justice to such children.
- The said Act prescribes stringent punishment graded as per the gravity of the offence, with a maximum term of rigorous imprisonment for life, and fine.
- It also provides for mandatory reporting of sexual offences, under Section 19 of the Act.



ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

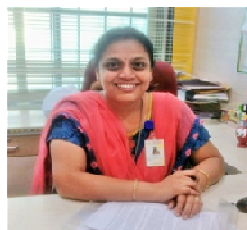
Authorities in school, especially teachers, play a major role in a child's life. It is a child's fundamental right to access an environment that is safe, protective and conducive to overall development.

Teachers should maintain a clear and open communication line with children so that in case of any incident the child is able to report, without any fear.

The authorities should have counsellors whom the children feel free to approach.

Major guidelines for schools to follow are—

1. The teachers, management and all the employees are bound by the Act and that they have to report any instance of child abuse as in Section 19(1) and 21.
2. Teachers should be trained to handle when a child reports such a case and what should be done. Teachers should also have a close observation of the performance and psychological behaviour of the students as most of the times signs include sudden disinterest on the part of the children in participating or disinterest to study etc.
3. The classes and the school in entirety should promote harmonious environment and inclusiveness.
4. A complaint box should be provided in each school and anytime a complaint on sexual offence is received the same should be acted upon immediately.
5. The schools should have CCTV cameras in main areas.
6. Informal conversations should be held in the form of discussions or activities or by observation with the students which can be helpful to notice if something is alarming.



ROLE OF PARENTS

Talking to children about body safety can be difficult for parents. Most parents think that if they talk to their children about body safety, they have to talk to them about "sex", which is not the case.

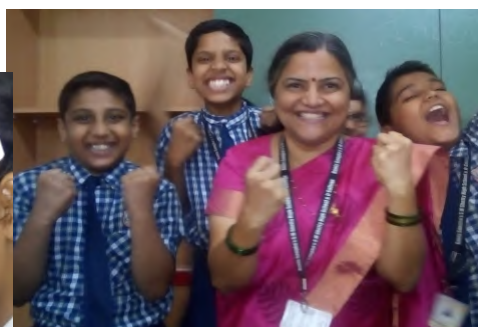
- Parents should begin to teach their children about body safety between the ages of 3 and 5.
- Teach children proper names for all body parts, including names such as genitals, penis, vagina, as private parts.
- Teach them to bathe, toilet, and dress themselves starting at an early age.
- Teach them that privacy, modesty, personal behaviours, and boundaries are important.
- Teach them that it is not okay for anyone to invade their privacy or boundaries. Explain that it is not okay for others to look at or touch their private parts. Explain that these parts are private and need to be kept private.
- Let your child know that saying "NO" is okay and the right thing to do.
- Do not force the child to give hugs or kisses to people they do not want to. Respect their right to tell "anyone" that they do not want to give them a kiss or a hug.
- Let the child know that he or she should tell the parents right away if anyone attempts to look at or touch their private parts. Assure them that you will listen to them, believe them and keep them protected.
- Reassure the child that most touches are okay touches, but that they can say "NO" and need to tell parents about any touches that are confusing or that scare them.
- Play "what if" games with the children if necessary and let them practice saying "NO". By role playing with children, you help them develop the skills they need in certain situations.

By Pratima Bhandarkar ,
Head - Counselling Centre

LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION PROGRAM—STATAE BOARD SCHOOL GRADE I-VIII



Learning the power of emotions



It's a win-win when we work as a team



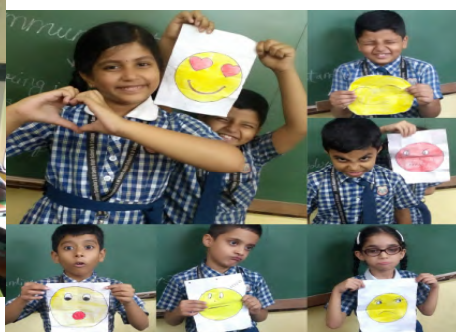
Wise beyond years @ decision making



Learning rules a new way



Being creative as a team



Honing emotional Intelligence



Anti Bullying Squad



The B-A-T Training



Transformers at work

SUICIDE PREVENTION SEMINARS WITH
TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS



POLICE DIDI



Head Inspector
Anagha Satavase
addressing the
Junior college students

A session of "Police Didi" was organised for Junior college students by the counselling centre in collaboration with the Powai police station.

A gradual boom in usage of internet has led to increase in virtual exposure and availability of information on finger tips.

At this age, Students begin to crystallise their identity based on the values and approval they

have gained from peers, adults and media around them. These transitory times bring along challenges of peer pressure, impulsivity and thrill seeking behaviours. Thus, these to-be adults need to be well informed and be aware of safety measures for self and others.

The workshop was facilitated by Head Police Inspector Anagha Satavase, Kishori Mane, and Sachin Wagh. They interacted with the audience on vari-

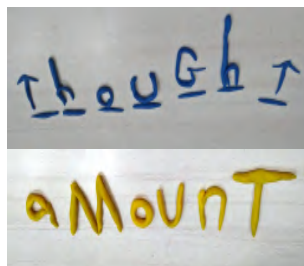
ous topics - cyber-crimes, POCSO, drug awareness, suicide prevention etc. . Making students responsible, law abiding citizens who are aware of their rights remained focus of the session.

The program aimed at building trust on the police force; it acted as a bridge to reach out to the young adults. It was received very well by the students and they participated enthusiastically.

TIPS FOR STUDENTS FOR LEARNING ENGLISH

Grade 1 and Grade 2- Activities to help your child improve language:

- Talk to your child about his/her day.
- Talk together about the books you read.
- Ask your child to tell you what he or she thinks or feels.
- Play block letter games, word games and board games.
- Use chapatti atta to make shapes, letters and words.



- Name 5 things when you walk around the

road.

- Use pulses, dal to build letters and play this activity to help your child to write.
- For spelling, use rice or atta, make your child to write in the air or use his/her body to write.
- Build a conversation



with your child. (Use question words like who, where, when, how, etc.)

- Encourage your child to ask questions about the story read to him/her.
- Help your child understand the meaning of what he or she is reading.
- Tell a story to your child every night before going

to bed.

Grade 3 and Grade 4- Activities to help your child improve language:

- Teach your child to read sign boards, restaurant menus, store and restaurant signs, flyers, brochures, maps.
- Involve yourself while reading a book to your child. After reading talk about interesting parts of the book. Create a reading time together.
- Play a game wherein you draw on a piece of paper and the child has to guess what is drawing about.
- Encourage your child to make greeting cards and write a message, thank you notes and letters to you.

-By Sarah Thomas
Special Educator

1. 'Critical Thinking' - Chpt 3 students

2. Parent session on Raising Resilient Teens

3. Let's Talk Suicide: session with IG2 stu- dents



1. IEYC Teachers ori- entation

2. Session on safe and unsafe touch

3. Be Smart, Don't Start' - drug education programme with IG1 students



Shadow Teacher felicitation and trainings



Workshops in the college section

1. Junior college de-stress session

2. 'The Teen brain' Junior college teachers

3. Suicide prevention and positive mental health degree college teachers session

4. Positive mental health sessions degree college students

5. Women's day celebra- tion Counselling center and women's develop- ment cell Degree college .



Professional Development

1. 'Dance integrates the broken sprite'
Divya and Sushreeta attending the International conference of Dance Movement Therapy .

2. 'Read with a smile'
Lakshmi , Regina and Sarah post their training conducted by Maharashtra Dyslexia Association



'Achievement for The Body, Mind and Soul'
Natasha on completion of 'Yoga teachers training program' from Ayush.

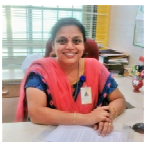


'We learn through movement'
Sushreeta attending classroom integration program - GATI .

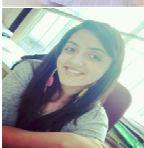


'Awareness comes first'
Divya attending the Prevention against child sexual abuse workshop.

Hello...from the Team



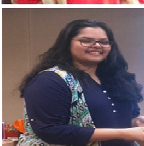
Pratima Bhandarkar - Centre Head
MSW, Dip. Play Therapy, PGDMS
Counsellor: AS, IB



Natasha Mehta- Counselling Psychologist
Counsellor: Pre Primary (Afternoon)
IEYC (Afternoon), State board (Primary)



Divya Nair - Clinical Psychologist
Counsellor: State Board (Secondary section) CP5 ,Checkpoint, IG



Sushreeta Sule - Clinical Psychologist
Counsellor: Junior and Degree College ,
CP I-IV (Afternoon)



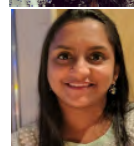
Regina Corda - Special Educator
State Board (Secondary section) and
Students with SEN



Sarah Thomas- Special Educator
State Board (Primary section) and
Students with SEN



Lakshmi Vivishnavel -Special Educator
CP, Checkpoint, IG and
Students with SEN



Radhika - Counselling Psychologist
Counsellor: Pre Primary (Morning)
IEYC (Morning) CP I-IV (Morning)

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