



AISCAP

ASSOCIATION OF INDIAN SCHOOL COUNSELORS AND ALLIED PROFESSIONALS



The Art & Science of New age Parenting & Innovative Practices in School Mental Health Promotion - The Charm, Challenges & the Culture of Wellbeing - ASSOCIATION OF INDIAN SCHOOL COUNSELORS & ALLIED PROFESSIONALS

The Child Development and Adolescent Health Centre under the aegis of the Institute of Mental Health & Life Skills, Moolchand Medcity, New Delhi organized a School Counselors' Conclave in the month of March 2011 which was keenly attended by more than 80 school counselors and allied professionals. The idea for AISCAP took birth at this platform as it was felt that school counseling programs need to be made an integral part of student's daily educational environment and school counselors should be partners in student achievement and overall development.

AISCAP is thus an endeavor of likeminded professionals to provide a forum that seeks to empower, support and streamline the school counselors & allied professionals in their role to effectively promote Child and Adolescent Wellbeing in an Inclusive Environment.

AISCAP was initially formed with 10 core members at its inception and today it has grown with over 300 members across the nation. School counselors from Chandigarh, Dehradun, Bangaluru as well as other cities have shown keen interest in our programs and have got associated with us as our members. Since its launch in August 2011, AISCAP has conducted various training workshops for school counselors and teachers.

The Second Annual National Conference of AISCAP was held in the month of Dec 2012 on "Evolving Landscape of School Mental Health in India": Emerging Needs and Emerging Solutions". Shri Vineet Joshi, Chairman, CBSE, was the Chief Guest of the conference. Renowned educationists from CBSE, NCERT, COBSE, IGNOU, Mental Health Professionals, Policy Makers and Health Care providers from various Ministries participated in this pioneering event and provided valuable inputs towards streamlining school counseling services as an important component of educational reforms. The conference was attended by over 100 participants from all over India.

AISCAP believes that parents are their children's first and most important teachers and that investment in strong parenting is crucial. The entire societal and emotional wellbeing of a nation is significantly enhanced when parents have the tools they need to help their kids start school, learn develop necessary social skills and grow up as productive adults. With this in mind we at AISCAP decided to dedicate our 3rd Annual National Conference to this theme.

AISCAP proudly announces its 3rd Annual National Conference – An International Conclave on "The Art and Science of New Age Parenting & Innovative Practices in School Mental Health Promotion".

The Organizing Committee of the Association of Indian School Counselors and Allied Professionals (AISCAP) in New Delhi invites proposals for paper presentations. Proposals should relate to the theme of the conference 'The Art and Science of New Age Parenting & Innovative Practices in School Mental Health Promotion'. We invite counselors and professionals in practice having vast experience in the field of counseling. We hope that these diverse perspectives on personhood may further dialogue, encounter and consolidate our identity as counselor educators and counseling psychologists in India. Theoretical, applied as well as research-based submissions are welcome.

For further information, please get in touch.

XIIth Annual Adolescent Peer Educators' Leadership Course in Life Skills – 2013, at the National Science Centre, New Delhi.

Theme: "Gender Sensitization in Schools: Peer Educators Perspective"

Life Skills & Values Education has gained global evidence of developing psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills in school going children. The paradigm involves making informed choices, building healthy relationships and empowering young lives. Keeping in step with the educational reforms that redefine the co-scholastic aspects of child development, 'Expressions India' launched the XIIth Annual Adolescent Peer Educators' Leadership Course in Life Skills – 2013, at the National Science Centre, New Delhi. The Theme was: "Gender Sensitization in Schools: Peer Educators Perspective".

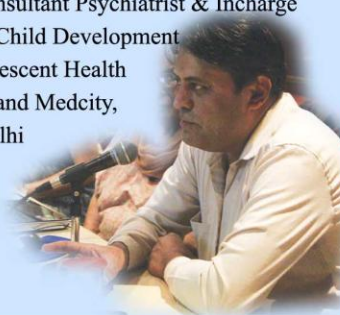
This program was initiated in tandem with the CBSE comprehensive school health initiatives, and had renowned national & international adolescent health experts to facilitate the students' march towards awareness, responsibility and empowerment. Prof. Gilbert Botvin who coined the term 'Life Skills' more than three decades ago, has commended the peer education initiatives for life skills being implemented by 'Expressions India'.

'Expressions India' – The National Life Skills, Values Education & School Wellness Program has pioneered the evidence based adolescent health promotion across the country through the 'Peer Educators' methodology for more than a decade now.

Dr. Jitendra Nagpal MD DNB

- Program Director 'Expressions India' - The National Life Skills, Values Education & School Wellness Program
- Sr. Consultant Psychiatrist & Incharge Inst. of Child Development & Adolescent Health Moolchand Medcity, New Delhi

Basic Parenting Styles



REPORT ON AISCAP EVENT HELD IN SPRINGDALES SCHOOL' 7 TH AUGUST'13

A workshop cum counselor's dialogue was organized on "Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012" (POSCO) on 7th august'13 by AISCAP in association with Springdales School, Pusa Road.

The objective of this important event was to discuss various emerging implications and challenges that schools have to face now after the POSCO Act has been passed in 2012.

The various sessions that were designed in this workshop were beneficial to bring out clarity among the participants from various schools of Delhi and NCR.

The first session was conducted by Ms Ameeta Wattal, Principal of the host school. Her session started off by setting an emotional tone among educationists for their role as a teacher. She strongly put forward that our classrooms are heterogeneous and as teachers it's our role to have inclusion in our classrooms itself.

After this, the participants were made aware about the POSCO Act in detail and thereby discussing its various dimensions like – Who are we including in this act? Who is responsible for following this act? What is the process of medical examination, the way reporting is to be done, the care and protection of children etc.

The need for having this act was also clarified by sharing that in India, 40% of population is of children out of which 53% have reported sexual abuse already and thus to reduce this problem, the importance of awareness, observation and systemic engagement with children was highlighted throughout.

The second session was carried forward by Ms Preeti Puri, Counselor, who further focused on increasing awareness about types of sexual abuse, the process of its identification and understanding various reasons for low reporting by the children. The various myths that are prevalent in the society were also combated in the end leading to sharing of participants' own stories.

The next session in the series was based on Understanding the profile of Sexual Offenders, which was taken up by Ms Astha Sharma, Psychologist, who made the participants understand the various causes that lead people to behave in a particular manner. The role that sexual fantasy plays was also highlighted beautifully via case study discussion. It was worth noting how sexual offenders choose the kind of victims for themselves. The session ended with the need and different type of support that is required by them and thus planning treatment goals.

The session that was highly required by all the participants after getting loads of information was to enhance the skills for working on such cases in the school setting. This desire was fulfilled by Ms Geetanjali Kumar, Counselor, who gave important tips that are needed to be followed by teachers and counselors to deal with such cases. The different conversational tips, ways of building trust, working on the information shared by the child and further using this act appropriately was clearly spelled out by the resource person.

The road map was also brought out clearly for the participants along with sharing of various strategies that are to be carried out in the school as a whole to create an ambience of the safe school.

The day ended with participants carrying emotions, information, skills and responsibility along with them. The event of AISCAP was highly appreciated by the participants, as this was the need of the hour.

Dr. Poojashivam Jaitly
Clinical Psychologist and School Consultant
Moolchand Medcity Hospital

PROFILING SEXUAL OFFENDERS



Counseling in its widest connotation existed in one form or the other from time immemorial. The services of school counselors help students resolve emotional, social, or behavioral problems and help them develop a clearer sense of direction. Keeping in focus the role and responsibilities of a counselor, or for that matter anyone who works in close quarters with children, the need to address the issue of sexual abuse with regard to our children becomes mandatory.

Profiling is a process in which attempts are made to understand the behavioral and personality characteristics of an offender through the aberrant behavior they commit. This procedure has gained increasing recognition as a valuable investigative procedure, though much more in the west than in our country, despite its immense need and contribution in understanding both the crime as well as the one who commits it.

Child sex abuse is universally viewed as abhorrent though it exists in every country, community and at all levels of society. One of the most important things is to understand how and what the child molesters think. No two sex offenders are exactly alike. In fact, one sexual assault expert said that 'sex offenders comprise an extremely heterogeneous population that cannot be characterized by single motivational or etiological factors' (Schwartz, 1995). However, sex offenders often exhibit some similar characteristics and this is what profiling helps highlight.

There are several different types of child molester; and each child molester has a particular way to meet his or her needs and justify his or her behavior. Molester's use distorted thinking to rationalize and justify their crimes, to make their own needs most important and to minimize their behavior. Many offenders convince themselves that the relationship they had with their victim was different; that it was a mutual, loving, caring relationship; that the sexual acts were consensual; or that the child somehow benefited from the relationship. The more an investigator understands the way a sexual offender thinks, the more prepared he will be to elicit a confession.

Role of sexual fantasy is integral in understanding what goes on in an offender's mind. Sexual Fantasy can provide the offender a sense of control, a means for dissociation, a way of inducing or enhancing arousal and the potential to regulate affect. It stimulates grandiosity since all fantasies are perfect and thus compensating for any felt sexual or relational inadequacies.

When deviant sexual fantasy becomes part of the offense chain an individual moves closer to the point where acting on aberrant sexual fantasies become a reality. At the point where sexual fantasy escalates to a degree whereby incorporation of further fantasy material fails to produce the desired changes in attention, arousal or the environment, individuals may attempt to transform their fantasy into behavior.

Most child sexual abusers offend against children whom they know and with whom they have established a relationship. Children often do not tell for a variety of reasons including the offender's threats to hurt or kill someone the victim loves, as well as shame, embarrassment, wanting to protect the offender, feelings for the offender, fear of being held responsible or being punished, fear of being disbelieved, and fear of losing the offender who may be very important to the child or the child's family.

There is growing evidence worldwide about the mental health morbidity in children with history of child abuse which leads to a wide range of challenges included in which are depression, an increase in suicide attempts, prevalence of substance use disorder, and a higher incidence rate of personality disorder. Children who have been abused previously are more vulnerable to further abuse, especially sexual abuse. Abused children develop low self-esteem, poor management of negative emotions and problem solving, and weak communication and social skills. A history of child sexual abuse has been found to be associated with problems with sexual adjustment in adult life.

For effective management of child abuse, a multi – pronged approach aiming at increasing awareness about, understanding the psyche of the offender, different forms of abuse and their clinical management is required. The organizations and the caregivers should be committed and dedicated for protecting the children against abuse. By diluting the stigma surrounding the child abuse, by not blaming the child for it and advocating the use of legal action whenever required is the need of the hour.

Astha Sharma
Clinical Psychologist
Moolchand Medcity Hospital



Anup Krishnan,
Class I B,
Bluebells School International

Being safe is being Loved ...

Q.) I am a student of grade IX and recently on one of the working days in school during recess, I saw a girl surrounded by some boys of her class who started teasing her and passed vulgar comments. As a peer educator, how can I deal with such situations within a school setup? How we can I as a student help our school and family in gender respect and dignity.

A.) I appreciate that you brought up such a sensitive issue. As a peer educator, you have a very important role to play, in dealing with such concerns at school. There is an urgent need to create awareness about these issues, which demand respect, empathy and a broader perspective to accept the gender specific needs of an individual. You could take the initiative of organizing gender sensitization workshops to redefine the thinking, practices and approach of individuals concerning genders, which should be addressed not only to students but to their parents and teachers as well. These days, adolescents in schools are quite open in discussing sensitive issues related to sexual harassment, infatuation and attractions. It's great that there are open discussions because both, boys and girls require constant guidance and counseling in order to develop acceptance as well as to deal effectively with the situations at hand. As far as your inhibitions are concerned, you must understand that you are also a part of this sensitive age group. The fact that you brought up the issue itself is much appreciated. The Counselors and teachers at school, and at the National Life Skills, Value Education and School Wellness program would always be happy to guide and support you, so that the next time, if a similar situation occurs, you will be equipped with the skills to address the problem.



Sanvi Singhal,
Class I B
Bluebells School Int.



Q.) I am 15 years old and I am quite confused and unaware of sex and sexual issues. My friends seem to know quite a lot and have frequent discussions about it, this confuses me as I feel that they have wrong information too and are unaware of the facts. I feel shy asking my parents or teachers but I am very curious. What should I do? Is it appropriate to discuss it with my friends only?

The beautiful transition from childhood to adulthood is the period you are traversing. Being aware with responsibility is the charm and challenge of this fascinating period of life. Besides physical and psychological transformation, it is a period when teenagers get mixed signals from the society often resulting in confusion, frustration and risk taking behaviours. Awareness regarding adolescent reproductive and sexual health does help in preparing young people like you to have responsible attitudes and awareness to the larger aspects of sexuality like gender, HIV/AIDS, sexual abuse and most importantly a sound personal hygiene. Bridging the distance from the enclosed world of family to the outside world of adult sexual relationships can be fraught, even for children who are relatively happy and well-adjusted. Having the right knowledge will enable you to have a healthy attitude about sex in your adult life and healthier relationships. More appropriately informed and clarified young people are on this subject more comfortable they are with themselves. Linking education with social and negotiation skills empowers youth to be responsible in matters of sexual behaviours and attitude.

Curiosity about these issues at this age is quite normal. Do not feel guilty or awkward about it. These impulses are natural and should be explored with an open mind. Instead of having wrong information from unscientific and unreliable sources, clarifying perceptions regarding adolescent's sexuality with your parents is the way to go about it. Discussing these issues with your parents may be awkward but it is quite essential too. If you cannot talk to your parents, then talk to a reliable adult or your school counsellor. Counsellors are open and non judgemental and are trained to educate people about these issues and would be able to provide you with the correct knowledge. You can then share the correct facts with your peers and spread awareness. Being aware and responsible is part of growing up with the currents times.

PINKY VIRANI'S, 'BITTER CHOCOLATE'



The most appropriate way to describe Pinky Virani's Bitter Chocolate is Quicksand. The reality of incidences occurring in the book will trap any reader in a manner that will be hard to get out of. Since I first read the book as an 11th grader, the issue of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) has become indubitable for me. Pinky Virani's matter-of-fact yet empathic tone made me question every other person's character- man or woman. As the reader goes onto the depths of this quicksand, she cannot help but accuse everyone of the possibility that they might be abusing their daughter, nephew, sister, friend's son, the 8 year old maid they have illegally employed; any child! It was a personal trauma I went through for months after the read.

Bitter Chocolate is not one of those thick research based books, which talk of malpractices in such gruesome detail that one will refuse to believe its actuality and stop reading, in denial. It convinces one of the level at which Child Sexual Abuse is a part and parcel of the society around us, here in India while retaining some details in the form of brief case studies placed across the Notebooks.

The three Notebooks are three phases in the book which take the reader through a journey of what is CSA, how it occurs in various forms- usually by the people who are trusted, how to help a victim and how to help yourself as a victim by breaking the cycle of traumatizing memories using the exit cycle of self awareness and acceptance.

Bitter Chocolate is a reality check to many, like myself, and a savior to many more who might be living a life of helplessness in hope of an apology, from the perpetrator, that will never come.

-Kamakshi Dadhwal, Bluebells School International

Child Sexual Abuse

Children are wonderful— innocent naughty, carefree but most of all they are happy. But when they are abused, that happiness is dimmed, and as for their innocence, there are no words to express its loss.

A report by Human Rights Watch states that sexual abuse is "disturbingly common" in Indian homes, childcare facilities and schools.

In a shocking revelation, the Indian government's first national study on child abuse in 2007 showed that 53.22 per cent of the children surveyed across India reported one or more forms of sexual abuse. One in three girls and one in seven boys are sexually abused before age 18.

The study also confirmed what many of us know and are not ready to admit - 50 per cent of the abusers were known to the child. They were in a position of trust and responsibility and most children had not reported the matter to anyone.

One in five adults report that they were sexually abused as children and more than 85% of adults who were abused say they never reported the abuse to authorities. Why do you think this is so? Chances are, you already know of a boy or girl who has been sexually abused—and in all likelihood also know someone who has abused a child. But Adults often miss opportunities to prevent child sexual abuse because of lack of information misinformation and confusing stereotypes about sexual abuse.

In response to this new awareness, lawmakers have risen to meet the need of the hour. The PocsO act that has been introduced by the government of India is 'one small step for mankind but one giant leap to ensure the safety of the child'.

Do you think the terms rapes and sexual abuse are the same?

The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act has made all forms of child sexual abuse a criminal offence. This includes both touching and non touching behaviours. It has made it possible for an abuser to be prosecuted for non-penetrative sex including molestation, pornography and sending obscene messages.

While the introduction of the PocsO Act will take care of punishing offenders but creating awareness of what is sexual abuse is our responsibility. Teachers and counselors not only need to step forward to educate the community and spread awareness but also learn to recognize a potential sexual abuser. It is important adults learn what to do when it seems like someone may be sexually interested in children or is harming a child in a sexual way.

Remember by educating yourself, you can become a powerful force in making the world a safer place for kids so that no child ever has to say —"if you don't stop it who will?"

Peeti Puri
Counselor,
Bluebells School International

ENRICHING JOURNEY INTO THE JOY OF PARENTING

This is the miracle of life. Becoming a parent is, indeed, the most rewarding experience one can ask for during one's entire lifetime. Giving birth to a baby comes with divine bliss, several responsibilities as well as concerns of upbringing. We all want to be the best parent we can and continue to be most effective for our children.

We all start out as parents with many ideas about parenting. We have hopes and dreams for our children and ourselves as parents. Sometimes, however, things get in the way of us being the parent we want to be. We feel stuck in patterns of responding to our children without really understanding why it happens. Being a parent is the most important job you can do. It also lasts a lifetime. Some say it is a journey filled with amazing rewards and sometimes seemingly difficult challenges.

Just like our children, our life experiences shape who we are. We draw our ideas about children and parenting from many sources around us, including our own parents, family, friends, child care, schools, professionals and the media. As parents, we often repeat what we know best. Most often what we know best is drawn from our own experiences. Our experiences of growing up in our family of origin are an important basis for the values and beliefs we hold about children, parenting and families although parenting is delightful, it can also be exasperating. More than anything we want to help our kids grow into healthy, happy and responsible citizens. Being a parent is many, many things all at once - fun, laughter, joy, heartache, anger, frustration - and the most intense and powerful feelings of unconditional love you will ever experience.

As a new age parent, you gain wisdom and insight from your own and others parenting experiences and thereby nurture the self - esteem of your children. Self-esteem gives a sense of self worth, of being lovable and capable. When these two qualities are in sync, a child has high and positive self-esteem.

CHILDHOOD IS A JOURNEY NOT A RACE

Children need to be healthy and happy to become productive and contented adults. To give them a happy childhood, we must need to know how they think and what they can do at different ages so that we can help them with any difficulties they face as part of growing up. We all know that children change a great deal from birth until they have grown up the first. It is important for us to remember that they also change a great deal in the way they think, feel and learn. For example, a two-year old child does not understand that an injection he gets from the doctor for high fever will help him, but thinks only how much it will hurt and will cry when he gets it. There are some things, however, which are true for children of all ages and for all types of families.

The healthy development of the child is of basic importance to the growth of the family & the nation. Development is usually categorized as: a). **Cognitive development**, including memory, problem solving and numerical understanding; b). **Language development**, the ability to communicate with others, to comprehend speech and express thoughts; c). **Social-emotional development**, including an understanding of the relationship to self or others, ability to regulate oneself and one's emotions, development of all social skills; d). **Temperament**, a biologically based tendency such as the ease or difficulty with which a child approaches routine and novel situations; and e). **Fine and gross motor development**, including child's ability to sit, walk, run and handle small objects.

A recent global perspective reiterated this perspective: "Health and cognitive interventions need to be interactive and designed as integrated programmes of nutrition, health, and psychosocial stimulation"

Although there is still much to be learned about the interactions of physical growth, illness and psychological development, and how they are related to family and social conditions, the intimate relationship of physical and psychological growth has been well established.

LEARNING TO LEARN IN A NEW LEARNING WORLD

It would be appropriate recalling four basic principles of development in early childhood education & care.

- * The first is that the learner is an individual with growing mental abilities.
 - * A second principle is that learning is a creative and necessarily involves both the subject and the object or material to be learned.
 - * The third principle is that knowledge is always a construction and contains something of the subject as well as of the material to be known.
 - * Finally, the aim of development in early childhood education is to produce active, self-motivated learner and critical thinkers. Therefore that early childhood education perspective, knowledge is always a construction. That is to say, reality as we know it is never simply a copy of the external world but rather is a construction or creation that bears something of ourselves and something of the external world.
- As the child matures, so too do his or her mental abilities. As a consequence, the child must construct and reconstruct reality in the process of growing up.

A RENEWAL OF OUR UNDERSTANDING OF CHILDHOOD...

Children can only grow up happy if they have other people around who are keenly interested in their development. For example, a child whom rarely nobody talks to will never learn to speak. This makes people who are around children, such as relatives, or teachers, very important persons. The overall wellbeing of a child also affects how he thinks and feels. For example, a child who is always hungry will feel unhappy and have no volition to learn much. On the other hand, a child who is very sad because of the loss of his mother may also refuse to eat and then internalize a lot of negativity.

There are many things children cannot do for themselves and they need much help from grown-up people. If a child cannot trust that the grown-up people around him will help, love & encourage him, he will not develop normally and may show adjustment problems later. Children of the same age who live in the same environment, will often be very different in the way they behave. For example, some children cry more than others, can be upset more easily, are more active or need more attention than others.

Such difference can already be seen in very young children. Children learn in this way that they can have many different feelings; be sad, angry or afraid and that the adults around them still love them and care for them.

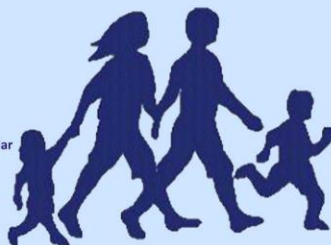
..... Many of the things we need, can wait. The children cannot.....
..Right now is the time his bones are being formed, his blood is being made and his senses are being developed. To him we cannot answer "Tomorrow". His name is "Today".

TECHNICAL AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT

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