

Beyond The Looking Glass!



Counsellor's Newsletter

Mental health affects every aspect of our lives, from our physical health to our relationships, productivity and overall happiness. World Mental Health Day was established on October 10 to commemorate the founding of the world federation in collaboration with WHO. The significance of the day was to raise awareness, provide a global perspective and promote it annually. Hence we celebrate it worldwide through awareness, support and accessible mental health services for individuals, communities, societies as a whole.



<https://elite24er.com/wp-content/>

Mental health awareness is an ongoing dialogue, one that's often been discussed in hushed tones until recently. At DYPIS, on October 10, we celebrated World Mental Wellbeing Day across all our sections. The focus was to emphasise the significance of mental health, its parity with physical well-being and the need for awareness and openness about the subject. Here's a sneak peek of the day.



IN THIS ISSUE

Mental Wellbeing Day

Mental Wellbeing Day – EYP

Mental Wellbeing Day – PYP

Mental Wellbeing Day – Secondary Section

Breaking the stereotypes

Bibliography

Early Years Programme (EYP):

The curious minds of early years require love and affection. Since young learners learn by modelling the expected behaviour, we had a storytelling session with teachers taking on the roles of the characters. This ensured that the learners could easily understand and connect to the story and its characters. The emphasis was on expressing and conveying their emotions to their loved ones. We aimed to convey that all feelings are normal, and to teach our young learners how to understand emotions and reach out for help. Taking care of kids' mental health is vital to cultivate empathy and kindness which lay the foundation of good mental well-being.

This was followed by an interactive mindfulness session which included activities to develop their focus and attention through mindful breathing exercises, music as a therapy to help us relax and a fidget toy as a takeaway activity. Learners enjoyed the day immensely and this was our small attempt to introduce them to an awareness about mental health. We believe that starting early helps our learners to grow up feeling more empowered to deal with difficult emotional and social situations effectively.



Primary Years Programme (PYP):

Parents are the most essential support system and the first role-models for every child. However, in order to be emotionally strong, the mental well-being of parents is equally important. In our PYP section, an interactive and informative workshop was conducted for our parent community. The workshop was led by Mrs. Nahid Siddique, a renowned health coach and a DYPIS parent. The session focused on the impact of nutrition and physical fitness on mental wellbeing and helped to answer several questions that used to worry our parents regarding their child's health and diet.



Following this, our grade 4 learners enthusiastically led a number of activities in an exhibition set-up. Under teacher guidance, the learners showcased their wonderful and informative hand-made posters and conducted brief presentations on several topics related to mental health.

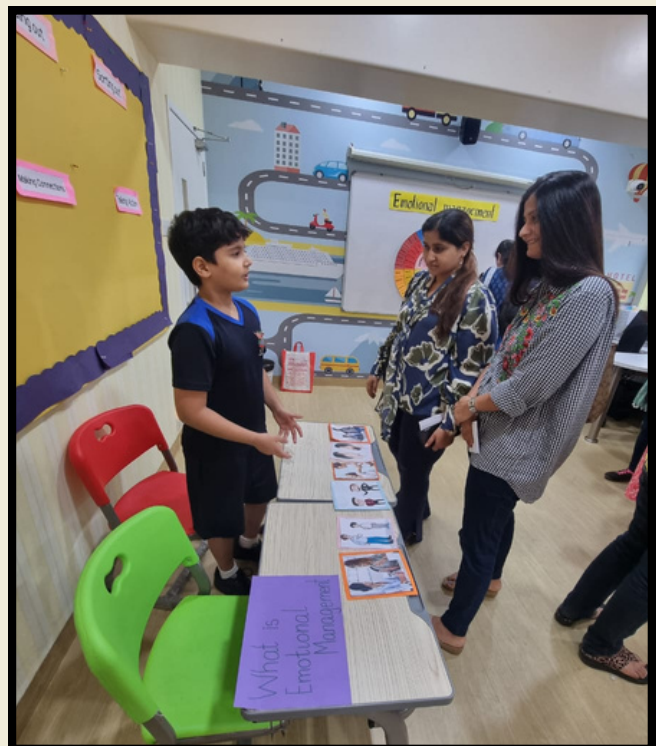


The four centres were created to spread awareness on how to identify and address children's behaviour, emotions, social interaction and develop their personality. The highlight of the exhibition was the student-led activities and games that parents participated in extremely enthusiastically. Each activity had a take-home message or a thought for the parent to mull over related to their own and their child's mental well-being. The topics were-

- Self awareness - we focused on understanding that what we communicate and how we communicate affects a child's emotional development and self esteem. The takeaway for parents was to focus on developing a sense of "connection over correction." "Understanding our child and our child understanding us" paves the pathway for value and respect.



- Emotional Management - Parenting in today's world is a tough job. Children may not be able to correctly express what they are feeling and it is quite easy to react without really understanding what the child is going through. Hence, this centre was designed to help parents to identify and share some techniques to manage their child's emotional intelligence.



- Accepting differences – Appreciating uniqueness was the central idea of this centre. Each one of us is different. It is important to feel comfortable with people who are different from us, which means that we must accept ourselves for who we are. Building a positive platform of being empathetic and compassionate about each other's feelings needs to be taught/ modelled to children. Everyone's needs, their way of processing information, implementing it into daily life is different or unique. Accepting this shapes a child's holistic personality.



- Move away from gadgets – This centre was about encouraging our learners and parents to minimise the use of gadgets and spend quality time with each other. This helps them in developing skills and other interests and also paves the way for connecting more strongly with each other. The more quality time they spend with each other, the stronger their mutual understanding and connection .



Secondary Section :

In the secondary, our senior secondary psychology students took the lead in conducting some very interactive and relatable sessions. Our students chose the often unvoiced concerns which are prevalent among young adults. To address these concerns, students delved deeper into these challenges to foster understanding and acknowledge them better.

Our school's mission encourages students to "become compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right". For grade 6, 7 and 8 we focused on challenges such as bullying and fear of missing out (FOMO). To elaborate on the effects of unkind acts such as bullying, the presenters emphasised the pros and cons of such behaviour, its consequences and its effect on the victim's self-esteem. Spreading the word about this in an open interaction gave insight to the learners to be empathetic towards others and be mindful of their own actions.



Our grade 9, 10 and higher grade students also enthusiastically participated in these sessions. The issues targeted for these grades were body shaming, misuse of psychological terms, substance abuse and impact of social media. Children at this age often have their own perceptions and views about these issues. It is important to filter the right from wrong, the correct information from the incorrect or false knowledge, rectify their understanding, and provide them the right roadmap to developing a better understanding of how such issues can influence them, and ultimately empowering them to deal with such situations.

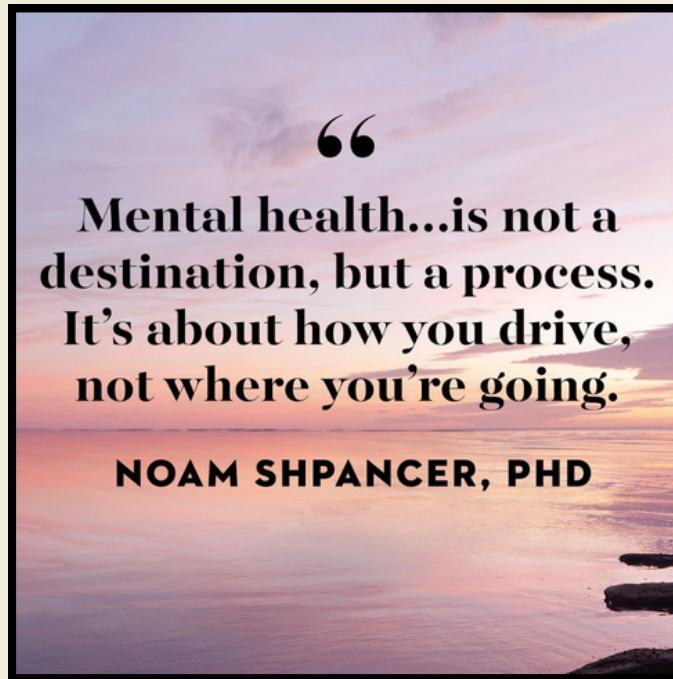


It was quite amazing to witness the healthy, engaging discussions that learners had during these presentations. They shared their thoughts and asked searching questions, making the entire exercise very lively and meaningful. As evident from the reflection they wrote at the end of the presentations, their perspectives on these challenges seem to have shifted towards a more positive outlook. They recommended that such sessions should be conducted more often.



Our purpose of fostering mutual understanding, encouraging open discussions and breaking the stigma surrounding mental health seems to have been achieved. We feel that this collaborative effort not only successfully raised awareness about mental health, but also provided the learners a fun and interactive way to gain accurate information about some of the issues bothering them.

Breaking the stereotypes



<https://hips.hearstapps.com/hmg-prod/images/>

Let's normalise talking about mental health and handling it in a positive manner. Prioritising mental health is vital to acknowledge each other and motivate ourselves. “Helping one person might not change the whole world, but it could change the world for one person”. “Let’s work towards breaking the stigma about mental health and seeking professional support, if needed, for maintaining healthy mental wellbeing.”

By spreading awareness and correct information, especially to the younger generation, let us all create an inclusive and supportive environment to each and every one at home, school, everywhere!

Please Note: The next newsletter will be published on 24 November 2023 in lieu of Diwali holidays.



Bibliography

Link for images:

“Elite care emergency centre – 2020”

<https://elite24er.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Mental-Health-Day-1536x922.jpg>

“ 45 inspirational mental health quotes – 2023”

https://hips.hearstapps.com/hmg-prod/images/mental-health-quotes-noam-shpancer-1651243006.jpg?resize=980:*