

Mental Health Training for School Teachers

Dr. J.S. Santhosh | January-February 2024

Organized by

Children of India Foundation
Coimbatore.

Programme Trainer

Dr. J.S.Santhosh

Head and Assistant Professor

Department of Social Work- KCLAS, Coimbatore.

Topic: Mental Health literacy for School Teachers

Venue & date:

1. Government Middle School, Kottaipalayam- 29.01.2024
2. Governemnt High School, Idikarai- 30.01.2024
3. Government Higher Secondary School, Kovilpalayam- 30.01.2024
4. Government Higher Secondary School, Vellamadai- 01.02.2024

Programme Report

The concept of mental health as defined by WHO as “state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community” was explained to the school teachers. A broad understanding on mental health problems, mental illness and its causal factors was discussed and clarified with examples. The most prominent problems faced by schoolteachers, stress and burnout was differentiated with its signs and symptoms. The teachers got orientation on common mental health problems such as anxiety and depression. The importance of Self-care and mindfulness practices such as meditation was stressed. Teachers were taught a meditation technique called ‘Anapana’ [observing ones’ breath] and its usefulness was disseminated.

The session also focused on Child and adolescent mental health. Teen mental health issues and illness such as conduct disorders, addiction, stress, general anxiety, panic disorders, learning disability was discussed. The role of teachers in handing the children from identification of mental health issues/problems to referral was imparted

and aspects such as being a counsellor, be-friended, life-skill trainer was discussed. The training also focused on teachers' educating the children on a. emotions, b. understanding emotions, c. empathy d. healthy relationships, e. being mindfulness and f. nurturing positive mental health. Psychological First Aid domains such as Approach, Stabilize, Serve their needs, Inform, Support and Turn up [refer] was taught to the teachers in the context of any emergency if they experience. Teachers were sensitized about suicides and statistics were shared to them which indicated that according to the National Crime Records Bureau's 2020 report, one student dies by suicide every 42 minutes, and Tamil Nadu is one of the six states in the country with the highest number of student suicides.

Teachers were encouraged to talk about mental health to students and utilize the opportunity whenever is possible in class. Since teachers play a pivotal role in equipping students with essential life skills that go beyond textbooks, they were motivated to act as facilitators and guides, designing engaging lessons and activities that foster positive mental health. By modeling empathy and respect, they create a safe space for students to experiment and learn from mistakes, fostering emotional intelligence and healthy relationships. Teachers were told that they can act as mentors and cheerleaders, encouraging students to navigate life's challenges with confidence and adaptability, shaping them into well-rounded individuals who can not only excel academically but also thrive in the real world.



Mental health literacy for School Teachers at Govt. Middle School, Kottaipalayam on 29.01.2024- A program for middle school teachers to gain knowledge on mental health literacy. It was organized by Children for India Foundation, Coimbatore. It is an interactive session with the school teachers on mental health and its related issues. Total Participants are 18 schoolteachers.



Dr. J. S. Santhosh conducted a session for Govt. high school teachers on Mental health literacy at Idikarai on 30.01.2024. It was organized by Children for India Foundation, Coimbatore. Teachers reflected on mental health_self care, gained knowledge on Psychological first aid, positive mental health. Total Participants are 24 schoolteachers.



Dr. J. S. Santhosh conducted a session for Govt. Higher Secondary school teachers on Mental health literacy at Kovilpalayam on 30.01.2024. It was organized by Children for India Foundation, Coimbatore. Teachers reflected on mental health_self care, gained knowledge on Psychological first aid, positive mental health. Total Participants are 32 schoolteachers.



Dr. J. S. Santhosh conducted a session on Mental health literacy for Vellamadai Govt. Hr. Sec. Schoolteachers on 01.02.2024. The event was organized by Children of India Foundation, Coimbatore. The seminar focused on teachers' burnout, stress management and child and adolescent mental health. Total Participants are 28 schoolteachers.