

Date: 13/10/2016

World Mental Health Day

“Dignity in Mental Health

Psychological & Mental Health First Aid for All”

A half day workshop was conducted on the occasion of World Mental Health Day on 13th October, 2016 at the premises of Jai Vakeel Foundation. The session began with a brief introduction of the theme “Dignity in Mental Health - Psychological & Mental Health First Aid for All”

Many people who suffer from psychological and mental distress, personal crises and mental disorders can benefit from receiving psychological and mental health first aid from professionals and the general public.

It involves humane, supportive practical help to fellow human beings who have suffered serious crisis event. It's a set of skills that anyone can use to when lending a helping hand to those who are affected. It aims at providing comfort to a person with psychological and mental health problem, to maintain good psychological and mental health.

With the intension of improving mental health of parents of children with Intellectual Disability, we aimed to strengthen the support system where by parents and professionals will work hand in hand for better communication and understanding of individual with Intellectual Disability and organized this workshop titled: “Parent – Professional Partnership leading towards Independence of Persons with Intellectual Disability”. We talked about what motivated the parents to keep going on or persist in their efforts towards training of their ward and share their experiences and success stories with respect to their child's development with the group.

A total number of 50 parents and 20 professionals participated in the workshop. The parents were grouped on the basis of different age groups of their wards. The purpose of grouping them was to have homogeneous groups with similar needs. The groups were provided with a number of articles in a basket from which they selected articles to build their story and write it on a chart paper provided. Beautiful stories came out based on their experiences. The values which stood out in their stories were: parenting as an institution, respect for all, unconditional love and complete acceptance, sharing and caring, independence, work distribution, cultural values and bonding with family, learning from their experiences and carrying it forward, perseverance, patience and hard work ,encouragement , slow but steady progress, efforts from parents as well as the child, parents network and their capabilities, protecting girl child, happiness for all, support and help, and reconstruction of their dreams and hopeful of betterment of their ward, a change in the attitude of parents where both the parents share equal responsibilities towards upbringing of their ward. They also expressed about the support they receive from the professionals in their journey of training and moving towards further progress of their child.

A group of 8 parents came forward to share their success stories with respect to the achievements of their ward (e.g. activities of daily living skills, social skills, preparing the child to travel by various modes of transport, to behave appropriately in social situations etc.) with the entire group and the steps they took in their training. The steps taken were: developing normal attitude for their ward by accepting them, developing patience, giving repeated instructions while training the child for a skill , consistency in their efforts, giving instructions in small sentences and in simple language, taking support of the family, punctuality in school attendance, preparing child in advance for an upcoming situations, exposing child to various social situations and thus giving him more opportunities to learn, seeking guidance from the professionals, parent - teacher communication / contribution, and rewarding child's efforts

Parents were observed to participate with a lot of enthusiasm. A lot team effort among the parents was observed as well as many a touchy moments came out during the workshop.

The workshop ended with a warm vote of thanks to all the parents for their continued efforts and their cooperation as well as encouraging them for further strengthening this parent - professional partnership by their active participation in all school activities.

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