

Talks to encourage schoolkids to 'open up' on mental health

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: In a significant move, the principals of various schools and counsellors took part in a workshop organised at a city hotel on Saturday on mental health of students and other related issues.

The objective of the programme is to throw light on how to provide utmost importance to mental health issues of the students in schools and how the leading schools in the city can encourage the teachers to discuss mental health issues with the students.

How the subject can be incorporated in the school curriculum had also been touched upon during the workshop hosted by a private hospital in the city in collaboration with a leading global publishing company.

A book titled *Talking about Mental Health in the Classroom: A Mental Health Curriculum for Teachers* was also launched during the event.

Dr Samir Parikh, the director of the mental health programme at the private



hospital, discussed about important issues like the necessity of incorporating life skills education for students and the prominent role of counsellors in schools in ensuring the well-being of children.

Mental health curriculum for teachers' was also published by the leading publishing company at the event.

While releasing the book Dr Parikh

said: "Talking about mental health is very important and there is no substitute for preventive efforts directed towards building life skills and resilience in students. This book is created as an aid for teachers in easily implementable modules to promote enhancement of knowledge of teachers and students about mental health problems.

It also focuses on encouraging helping behaviours, building resilience and creating a culture of well-being in the classroom."

The principals of over 60 leading schools, who were part of the workshop, appreciated the joint initiative putting forth professional views on such a sensitive topic.

Many prominent schools from the city took part in the event. They were St. James School, Don Bosco High School-Liluah, De Paul School - Bansdroni, La Martiniere, Gems Academia International School, The Heritage School, Douglas Memorial Higher Secondary School and St Thomas Girls' School-Khidirpur.