

Fortis Hospital, Vashi conducts Pro-Social Peer Moderator program for school students

~The program is aimed at imparting life-skills among school children to weather through social influences for a healthy and adaptive behavior~

Navi Mumbai, July 27, 2016: Fortis Hospital, Vashi on Wednesday successfully conducted the Pro-Social Peer Moderator Programme, which is aimed at imparting life-skills among school children to weather plethora of social influences for a healthy and adaptive behavior in their formative years. This year's edition focused on two major student problems: bullying in schools and influence of media exposure.

To help school children combat bullying experience in schools, the team of **Dr Samir Parikh, Director, Department of Mental Health and Behavioural Sciences**, has conducted an innovative prevention and intervention "**Bully to Buddy**" Programme, which is created in self-sustaining format requiring minimum support from the external experts for its continued application. In the first phase, an intensive training in imparted to a school-recommended **Anti-Bullying Squad**, which consists of students from each identified class and a team of teachers. In the second stage, the Anti-Bullying Squad conducts a 45-minute bullying awareness programme with their peers, while talking to them about the squad and its role. As a follow-up, a 1-hour booster session with the Anti- Bullying Squad will be conducted after 3 months to understand progress as well as help with identified struggles.

Another module of the Programme was conducted to address the burning issue of influence of Media Exposure on impressionable adolescent student minds. The New-age Social Media bombards individuals with thousands of media messages each day and the adolescent population is its single-largest consumer. The media has been implicated in increased aggression, unhealthy lifestyle/life choices and lowered self-esteem. A Fortis Healthcare Study conducted amongst 1350 school-going youth in Delhi/NCR aged 14-17 years to analyse the effect of media on attitudes, opinions, lifestyles of adolescents revealed that 74% youth in Delhi-NCR rely on Social Media for news, fashion, lifestyle and as many as 77% of them are influenced by television.

"The **Media Literacy** module is designed to enable students to filter information – to differentiate between more legitimate and reliable sources of information and entertainment, to learn specific skills of critical viewing and decision-making and to follow safe media practices," says Dr Parikh.

Salient Features:

- ~ 3-hour interactive sessions by Fortis team of mental health professionals, by use of power point presentations, posters, role plays, modeling, interactive discussions and Q&A
- ~ In-depth understanding for students on specific concepts and related topics for issues of concern
- ~ Learning and application of life skills by students to handle everyday challenges on issue of concern
- ~ Specialized training to peer moderators to further conduct interactive sessions with other students at their school
- ~ Training for moderator teacher to facilitate student activities in school
- ~ Regular guidance and supervision with our experts over phone/mail
- ~ Membership to exclusive Fortis Pro-social Peer Moderator Facebook group to enable interaction with fellow peer moderators across the country

Fortis' Pro-Social Peer Moderator program involves students, along with a teacher moderator. In every module, one team of students is trained on one particular topics to equip them with necessary life-skills. The students further use these skills to disseminate their knowledge and coping strategies to their peers, who benefit from their learning. Other topics that are covered under the Programme include Aggression Management, Risk Behavior Management, Gender Sensitization, Study & Exam Skills etc.

Explaining the rationale behind the Pro-Social Peer Moderator program Dr Samir Parikh said: "The Pro-Social Peer Program is based on social learning theories in psychology, and attempts to channelize the power of peer influence in the right direction. It aims to utilize influence of peers to impart adaptive life-skills for healthy all-round personality development. It has been proven to reduce and prevent the occurrence of problems like risk-taking behaviour, aggression & violence, substance abuse, delinquency etc. Through intensive and interactive workshops, the primary emphasis is on learning through observation, wherein the students are trained to become the role models for their peers and help other students in learning more adaptive forms of behavior."

Life-skill programs have been identified as one of the key areas that can bring about a lasting change in the educational system and enhance personality of school-going children. These programs help foster positive growth & development, and prevent the occurrence of mental health-related and social problems.

"Children are our hope for a brighter tomorrow. Today's children live in a lot more competitive environment today than ever before and so learning and developing Life-skills are becoming integral part of learning. We hope that with such skills, every child can truly make a difference and emerge as a winner in the race of life." said Dr Bipin Chevale, Facility Director, Fortis Hospital, Vashi.

Pro-Social Peer Moderator Programme has been successfully running in the Delhi-NCR region for more than a decade and it has been launched in Mumbai 2 years ago, which has been extremely successful.

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For more information, please visit: www.fortishealthfaliureprogram.com

About Fortis Healthcare Limited:

Fortis Healthcare Limited is a leading integrated healthcare delivery service provider in India. The healthcare verticals of the company primarily comprise hospitals, diagnostics and day care specialty facilities. Currently, the company operates its healthcare delivery services in India, Dubai, Mauritius and Sri Lanka with 54 healthcare facilities (including projects under development), approximately 10,000 potential beds and 314 diagnostic centres.

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