

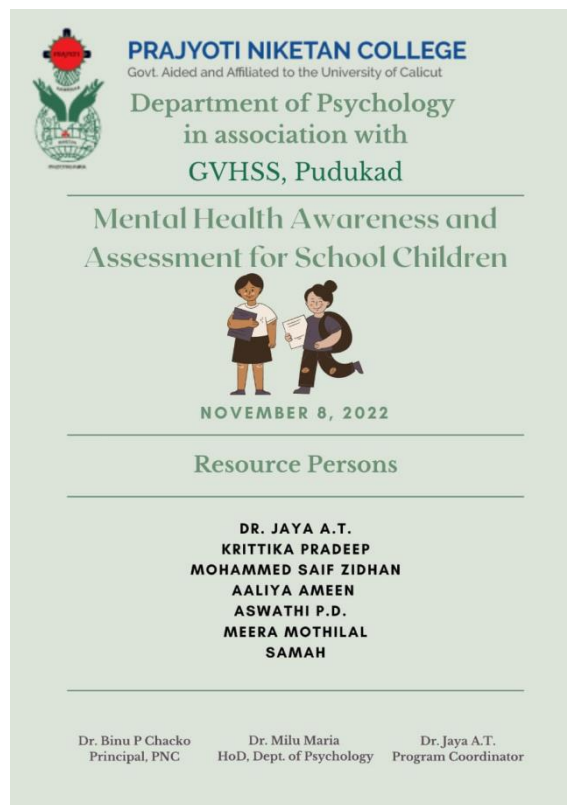
MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AND ASSESSMENT FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

REPORT PRAJYOTI NIKETAN COLLEGE, PUDUKAD

Today's children are tomorrow's adults. They grow up to become citizens, with the power to influence others, with the right to vote, with the burden of dealing with various stressors of adult life. Hence, ensuring that children are aware of mental health and its influence is of utmost importance.

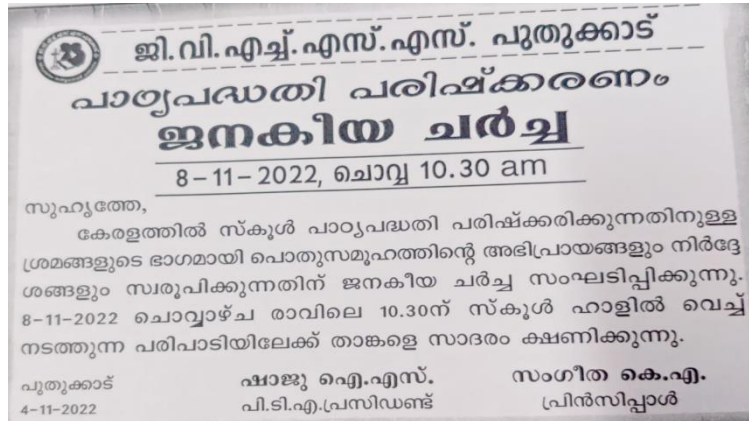
On Tuesday, November 8th, 2022, the final year B.Sc Psychology students of Prajyoti Niketan College along with program coordinator Dr. Jaya A.T. organized a Mental Health Awareness and Assessment Programme in GVHSS, Pudukad, overseen by the Head of Department, Dr. Milu Maria Anto.

A group of six students- Krittika Pradeep, Mohammed Saif Zidhan, Aaliya Ameen, Aswathi P.D., Meera Mothilal and Samah- visited the school to interact with students and conduct the CB-RS test for Conformity. Meanwhile, Dr. Jaya A.T., research scholars Ms. Bayana BOMS and Ms. Pulari Rohit participated in a formal discussion regarding modification of school curriculum.



Discussion for Modification of School Curriculum:

Dr. Jaya A.T. and the research scholars actively took part in the discussion, providing relevant arguments along with creative suggestions for the improvement of school curriculum and proposing methods for the betterment of mental health among school students. They emphasised on the balance between academics and extra curricular activities, and the importance of prioritising mental health. Their contributions to the discussion was very well received.

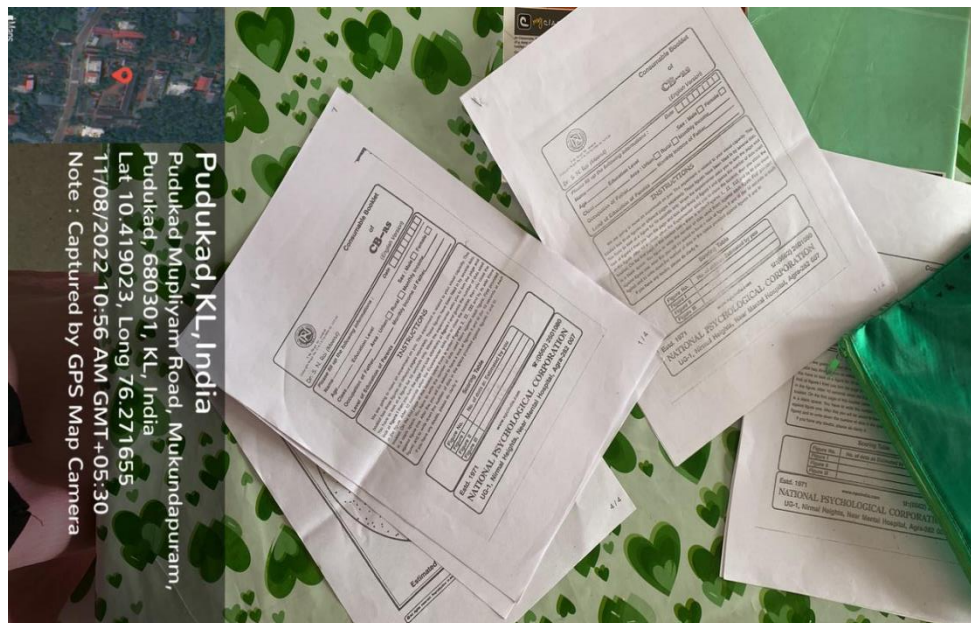


Mental Health Awareness and Assessment Session:

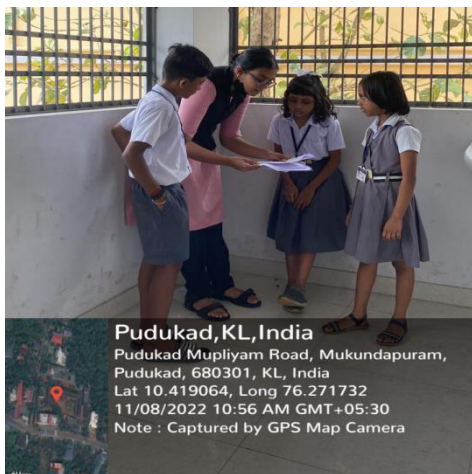


The group of resource persons split into four, conducting the test on five batches of students, from grade IV to VII. The program was structured into four parts: An Introductory session to build rapport, a brief but informative talk about mental health, the conduction of the CB-RS and an interactive period to entertain the students. The session also included one to one communication with the students where they were encouraged to speak freely. The students were very responsive, excited and comfortable.

With regards to the Conformity Assessment, the students were very co-operative and followed instructions meticulously. They were also really curious as to why the test was being conducted. Results showed low levels of conformity as is the trend in children of that particular age group. The reason for this could be their disregard for being seen as similar to others and lack of knowledge of social norms, as opposed to adults who tend to avoid standing out or being termed as the odd one out.



Stills of Students Conducting the Test:



Conversations with students during the sessions indicated a general positive reception. A few students expressed their frustration in not being able to process what was being taught by the teachers. The presence of canes in all classrooms was noted by the PNC students which shows the need for better methods of punishment and reinforcement, preferably those that do not instil fear in the students or promote violence or bodily harm. Workshops and programs that promote consent, the importance of the word “No”, and the difference between good touch and bad touch would also be of great benefit.

Another observation to be highlighted would be the students’ preoccupation with one’s religion. Almost every student enquired about the religious identity of the resource persons which conveys the need to teach young children to separate religious identity from the expectations they can hold of a person.

In summary, while the programme was positively received, there is a glaring need for more mental health resources at the institution. Programmes that facilitate the transition of students from on-line to in-person classes, is the need of the hour.

The visit provided a platform to assess the students in the age group of 9-12, and emphasized the necessity of re-evaluating the current provision made in schools and what must be done to improve upon them.

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Certified that a program on mental health awareness and Assessment for school children conducted by Dr. Jaya.A.T, and following students Krittika pradeep, Mohammed Saif Zidan, Maya Krishnan C.H, Meera Mothilal, Samah from Prajyoti Niketan College on 08/11/2022



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