



# **The Smiling Schools Project:**

## **A Report on the School Leaders’ Orientation & Teachers’ Trainings**



## **Introduction & Acknowledgements**

This document contains reports on Mental Health Sensitisation trainings conducted for school Principals and school teachers, as a part of Project Mumbai's 5-year Smiling Schools Project. We thank the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) and our Partners for their support in both planning and implementation.



**The Smiling Schools Project**  
**A Report on the School Leaders' Orientation**

**Date:** 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019

**Venue:** N M Joshi Municipal School, Lower Parel

**Time:** 9.30 a.m. – 1.30 p.m.

**Number of participants:** 130

**Participant profile:** Headmasters and Principals from MCGM schools across East-zone, West-zone and City-zone.

**Graciously presided over and supported by:**

Mr. Praveen Pardeshi, Municipal Commissioner, MCGM

Mr. Ashutosh Salil, Joint Commissioner, MCGM

Mr. Sainath Durge, Education Committee, MCGM

Mr. Mahesh Palkar, Education Officer, MCGM

**Appreciate the presence of:** Mr. Prakash Charhate, Deputy Education Officer, MCGM and  
Ms. Aastha Sethi, Chief Minister's Office

**Our Esteemed Mental Health Panel:**

Dr. Chetna Duggal - Assistant Professor in the School of Human Ecology, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS)

Dr. Henal Shah - Professor (Additional) and HOU Department of Psychiatry, Nair Hospital



Dr. Kersi Chavda - Member of the Indian Psychiatric Society (IPS) Task Force dealing with College Psychiatry

Dr. Mona Gajre – Head of Paediatrics, Lokmanya Tilak Municipal General Hospital

**Our Esteemed NGO Partners:**

Apnishala Foundation, Institute for Exceptional Children (IEP), Prafula, SIMHA and Teach For India (TFI)

**Our Respected Panelists:**

Dr. Chetna Duggal, TISS

Fr. Godfrey D'sa, Prafula

Mr. Mahesh Palkar, MCGM

Ms. Meera Kothari, GEAT Schools

Mr. Shishir Joshi, CEO, Project Mumbai (Moderator)

**Facilitators for the Leaders Orientation:** Ms. Lamia Bagasrawala, Co-founder SIMHA, Ms. Malvika Fernandes, Project Co-ordinator, Project Mumbai, Ms. Tanvi Sambrani, Project Officer, Project Mumbai

**Assisted by:** Ms. Devika Kapoor, Project Officer, Project Mumbai and Ms. Madhura Damle, Intern, Project Mumbai



**The Smiling Schools Project**  
**An Initiative by Project Mumbai in Collaboration with the MCGM**

The Project Mumbai Team believes that appropriate Mental Health Education could end this stigma, sensitise school stakeholders about mental illness prevention and coping, and highlight the importance of participation of the entire community in creating physically and mentally safer schools. With this as its basis, the five-year Smiling Schools Project aims to advocate for a safe learning environment for all students, through awareness creation and capacity building among all school stakeholders - including principals, teachers, students, parents, and school counsellors - to respond to mental health challenges.

In its first year of implementation, the Smiling Schools Project will reach out to 150 schools, close to 600 teaching staff, 12,000 students, 12,000 parents and approximately 50 counsellors. By the end of its course, the Project will have covered approximately 1050 schools, and over 2 lakh students, parents, and staff members, thoroughly covering topics such as bullying, teacher-student relationships and peer relationships, happiness and wellbeing, stress and coping, emotional regulation, and self-care. This project will employ a ‘train-the-trainer’ model, wherein facilitators from partner organisations will receive training from Project Mumbai Mental Health staff on a set curriculum that has been approved by a distinguished Advisory Board, who will in turn educate school stakeholders through monthly training and review meetings held in the schools.

Our Training and Implementation Partners for this year include Apnishala, IEC, Prafula, and TFI. We strongly believe that such a collaboration will ensure commitment to the cause of mental health and wellness from the very best in the field of education, health, and governance.



### Leaders' Orientation Event Flow

Time	Component	Description
9.00a.m. - 9.20a.m.	Registration and Seating	Principals were given a docket to refer to throughout the program and also for Orientation
9.20a.m. - 9.30a.m.	Context setting of The Smiling Schools Project	A brief description was given about the need for The Smiling Schools by Mr. Shishir Joshi
9.30a.m. - 9.40a.m.	Context setting about MCGM schools	Role of Principals and teachers in promoting school mental health by Mr. Mahesh Palkar
9.40a.m. - 9.50a.m.	Key thoughts on mental health in school setting	Addressed by Mr. Praveen Pardeshi, Mr Ashutosh Salil, and Mr. Sainath Durge
9.50a.m. - 10.00a.m.	Introduction of Partners	Training and Knowledge Partners were introduced to the guests
10.00a.m. - 11.00a.m.	Round Table on Mental Health	Experts from the fields of Education, Medicine, Mental Health, and NGOs discussed Mental Health as a crucial issue to be addressed within the Indian context.
11:00a.m. - 11.15a.m.	Break	School leaders dispersed into two groups for Orientation Break-Out Sessions
11.15a.m. - 11.30a.m.	Understanding Mental Health	Facilitators and School Leaders discussed what mental health involves, and what the mental health spectrum constitutes.
11.30a.m. - 11.45a.m.	Link between Safe School Climate and Mental Health	Facilitators and participants discussed elements that contribute to making a school climate safe, and understand how school climate influences mental health for all stakeholders



11.45a.m. - 12.15p.m.	The WHO Whole School Approach	Facilitators introduced the participants to the WHO Whole School Approach and discuss similar relevant initiatives around the globe.
12.15p.m. - 1.00p.m.	Creating a Mental Health Vision	Participants were given guidelines to make a vision for their school, and they will be encouraged to share their ideas.
1.00p.m. - 1.30p.m.	Closure	Recap of the session; and clarification of doubts.

The Leaders' Orientation began with a talk by Mr. Shishir Joshi, CEO and Founder of Project Mumbai, addressing all MCGM principals about the need of mental health awareness in schools for all stakeholders – principals, teachers, students and parents. He also spoke about the journey of the Smiling Schools Project from inception to date, and the broad structure for the next five years, which will be a collaborative effort by the MCGM, Project Mumbai, and the above-mentioned NGO partners to spread mental health awareness and skills for emotional coping, self-care and support for all.



**Mr. Shishir Joshi addressing the MCGM Principals at the School Leaders' Orientation about The Smiling Schools Project and the role of school Principals**

This was followed by talks by eminent members of the MCGM, on the need for mental health awareness in society in general, and schools as a starting point, since mental health-related concerns may emerge at a young age. In their speeches, the honourable members also shared personal anecdotes of the challenges they faced in school, as well as how the influence of trusted adults in schools helped them to overcome these challenges. Each speaker also highlighted the stigma around mental health and the need to talk about it openly. They lauded the Smiling Schools Project for their efforts in attempting to be the pioneer of spreading mental health awareness and equipping school stakeholders with skills to help with psychosocial and emotional support.





**Honourable Municipal Commissioner of the MCGM Mr. Praveen Pardeshi addressing the Principals about the benefits that a mental health program such as the Smiling Schools Project can have in the school system**



**Honourable Joint Commissioner of the MCGM Mr. Ashutosh Salil sharing personal accounts of his school days and how a safe school environment with trusted adults helps students cope with stress**



**MCGM education committee member Mr. Sainath Durge addressing the Principals about the importance of mental health in schools**



**Education Officer of the MCGM Mr. Mahesh Palkar speaking to the Principals about the challenges we face in the MCGM schools, and how mental health plays a big role in the overall health of the child**

The Keynote speeches were followed by an interactive panel discussion on school mental health – exploring the gaps, and the unique solutions that we as a society can try to overcome these gaps. Panelists addressed a range of topics including mental health concerns of children and families in today’s time, the role of counselling in helping children and adults to manage their mental health, the needs of mental health of teachers and students in MCGM schools, and how sensitisation and resilience can be spread within our society.



**From left to right, panellists Fr. Godfrey D’sa, Dr. Chetna Duggal, Mr. Shishir Joshi, Dr. Henal Shah and Ms. Meera Kothari**





The School Leaders' group was then divided into 3 smaller groups of 40 each to carry on with a more intensive orientation of mental health and school climate.

### **Detailed Interactive Orientation for school Principals on mental health – The Process:**

1. Participants formed pairs and shared their ideas of what constitutes mental health. These ideas were discussed in the larger group and listed on the blackboard.
2. Participants were introduced to the World Health Organisation's (WHO) definition of mental health.
3. The mental health spectrum was introduced as a continuum, and participants were taken through the dynamic process wherein individuals move from mental wellness to emotional distress.
4. Participants were helped to explore how the spectrum would be important in the context of their classroom and school, by recognizing the need to support students who may be at different positions on the spectrum.
5. Participants were then asked to reflect on schools that they have visited and identify what they have seen, heard or experienced that would communicate that as an emotionally safe and happy school. Participants discussed this in pairs and then shared their ideas in the larger group. The ideas were used to conceptualize school climate along four domains: physical environment of the school, relationships between all stakeholders, student interactions and school vision.
6. Once the elements of school climate were established, their link with the mental health spectrum was discussed. With the spectrum as a reference tool, participants were taken through the range of factors that will prevent students from moving towards the illness side of the spectrum and factors that will put students at risk for mental health concerns. This understanding laid the foundation to recognize how factors within the school environment can facilitate or hinder wellbeing.



7. The WHO model was then introduced as a way to enhance school environment or climate. Points discussed during the initial sessions where Mr. Ashutosh Salil mentioned that 90% of problems would be taken care of if the school environment was safe and students could find trusted spaces to share. This point was emphasized and the need for a healthy and safe school climate was reiterated with reference to the mental health spectrum.
8. The other three levels of the WHO model were also discussed and the role of Safe Schools Program in training teachers and supporting schools in developing programmes for levels 1 and 2 were also iterated.
9. The training concluded with a discussion on their role as leaders of the school; an activity was conducted wherein the leaders were encouraged to create a mental health vision for their school.

### **Highlights:**

1. Asking participants to reflect on their ideas of mental health and what mental health constitutes yielded a good understanding of their conception of mental health; this could be used as reference points during the session while discussing the spectrum and the WHO model.
2. Engaging participants in pairs for discussions was an effective way to encourage participation from all leaders.
3. Referring to every day examples to discuss distress and mental health concerns was useful in eliciting the subtle differences between these concepts and recognizing how one can move from distress to experiencing a concern.
4. Participants shared that the mental health spectrum is an innovative and useful way of conceptualizing mental health, and along with the WHO Whole School model, helps in understanding the need for different actions based on the individual's needs.
5. The flow of the session and the easy accessibility of hand-outs in the participant handbook.



6. Creating the vision and sharing it with other school leaders in the group was an effective exercise in consolidating some of the learnings and reflections from the session.
7. Participants subjectively reported that the sessions was extremely useful and some of them recommended more frequent sessions on such topics as well as follow-up sessions.

#### **Feedback from Leaders:**

1. This session by Smiling Schools Project is excellent. Every school needs these sessions. All the H.Ms are ready to work with you for our schools.
2. Nice information given. This training is helpful for improvement in students' mental wellness.
3. It is good to know that the education department is talking of mental health and is making a vision for mental health.
4. Problems faced by teachers during their teaching learning process should be given more concern/importance.
5. NGO should come to school and conduct meetings with parents and students



**Table No 1 : Feedback - Leaders' orientation**

**N= 118**

Question	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Blank
Participation and interaction was encouraged	82	02	10	1
The topics covered were relevant to me	79	0	14	1
The content was organized and easy to follow	85	0	7	2
The material provided was helpful	86	0	7	1
The training experience will be useful to me	90	0	4	0

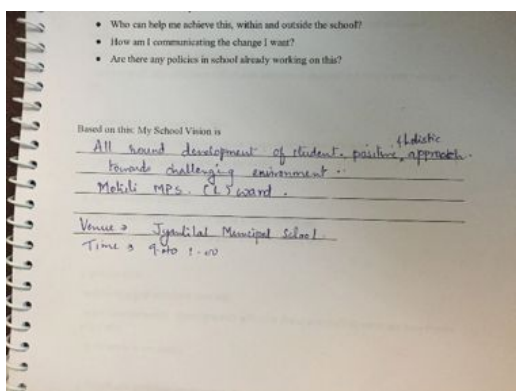
**Recommendations from Participants:**

1. Creating more spaces for engagement and participant sharing, especially of their contextual needs and challenges since they have a strong contextual understanding of their schools and students. These narratives can then feed into discussions on risk- and protective factors and designing the programmes for awareness and education; and
2. Encourage active participation by parents in their children's learning process so as to ensure that the "Safe School" climate extends beyond the physical school environment.





## School Leaders brainstorming their ideas about mental health in the Smiling Schools Project Leaders' Orientation



## An example of School Mental Health Vision as seen by the school Principals



**Team Smiling Schools Project at the culmination of the Leaders' Orientation**



**The Smiling Schools Project**  
**A Report on the School Teachers' Training**

**Date:** 18<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019

**Time:** 9.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.

**Venues:**

Jayantilal Vaishnava Municipal School, Ghatkopar

IB Patel Municipal School, Gurgaon

N M Joshi Municipal School, Lower Parel

**Number of participants:** 234

**Participant profile:** Teachers from MCGM schools across East, West and City Zone

**Participant attendance across zones:**

East zone: 68 teachers

West zone: 77 teachers

City zone: 89 teachers



### Flow of the Training

Time	Component	Outcome
9 a.m. – 9.15 a.m.	Registration	Participation indicator
9.15 a.m. – 9.30 a.m.	Introduction to The Smiling Schools Project Introduction to participants and facilitators	The tone for the training was set.
9.30 a.m. – 10.00 a.m.	Pre-test	Understanding the current attitude and knowledge of participants with respect to school climate
10.00 a.m. – 10.15 a.m.	Break	Participants got ready for the session
10.15 a.m. – 10.45 a.m.	Understanding mental health	Participants understood what is mental health and the mental health spectrum.
10.45 a.m. – 11.00 a.m.	Understanding school climate	Participants discussed elements that contribute to making a school climate safe.
11.00 a.m. – 11.30 a.m.	Mental Health and school climate – the link	Participants discussed a case to understand how school climate can influence mental health.
11.30 a.m. – 11.45 a.m.	Break	
11.45 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.	The WHO Whole School Approach	Participants learnt about the WHO whole school approach, and discussions happened based on videos. Participants worked in groups to make a whole school plan.
1.15 p.m. – 2.00 p.m.	Lunch	



2.00 p.m. – 2.45 p.m.	Initiating The Smiling Schools Project in class – Needs assessment	Participants learnt the process of needs assessment through circle time
2.45 p.m. – 3.30 p.m.	Initiating The Smiling Schools Project in class – Two Initiatives	Participants learnt the steps to begin preventive and promotive safe school initiatives in their class/school
3.30 p.m. – 3.45 p.m.	Self-care	Participants understood the importance of taking care of their own mental and emotional self
3.45 p.m. – 4.00 p.m.	Closure	Recapping the day





The Teacher Training began with facilitators conducting an ice-breaker with the participants, in order to get to know them by name and the school they teach in. This was done by making pairs and introducing each other, passing a ball between participants and introducing oneself with an adjective or a special talent. Here, participants also shared their professional experience in terms of their years of experience, expertise, and their expectations from the training. This exercise helped the trainers understand the teachers' context better. This also helped the facilitator to provide relevant information in the training.



**A facilitator-participant group doing an introduction round through sharing of talents and strengths**

The ice-breakers were followed by facilitators instructing participants to fill in the pre-test; the Authoritative School Climate Survey was used to collect data. It is a 62-item Likert scale which looks at student engagement, discipline structure, teacher respect for students, student willingness to seek help, prevalence of teasing and bullying, staff concerns of safety, student aggression towards the teacher, teacher response to student aggression, parent-teacher relations, and staff collegiality. Participants were assured that the information would be used for research purposes only. The tool was provided in the language of preference of the participant.

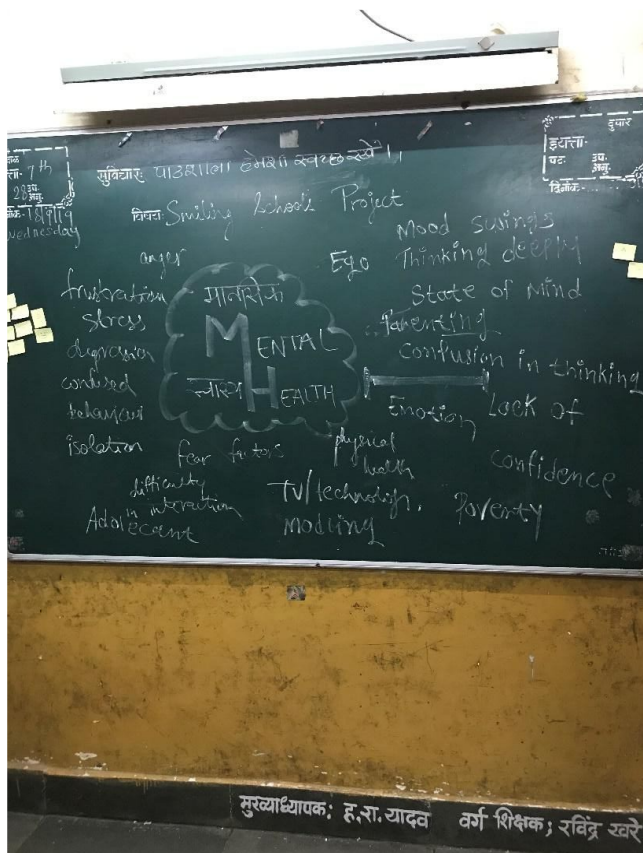


**Participants filling in the Authoritative School Climate Survey for baseline data to measure school climate**

The pre-test was followed by an understanding of what mental health is and a discussion on the mental health continuum. Different mediums were used to explain mental health. A few examples include brainstorming, showing videos and having discussions based on them, conducting activities to showcase the importance of taking care of mental health. Mental health was explained by drawing parallels to physical health, i.e. just as physical health is spoken about and taken seriously, mental health too must be given adequate importance.



**Participants engaging in an activity aimed at increasing their awareness about stress and mental health.**

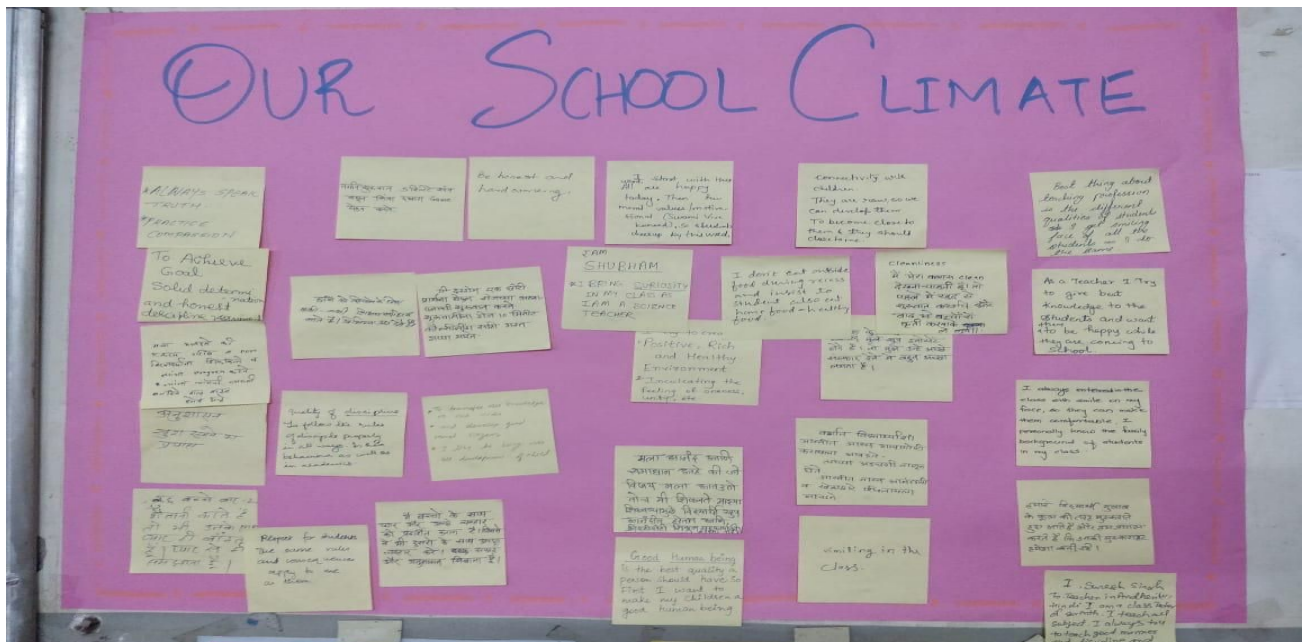


**Participants and facilitators brainstorming about their ideas about mental health implementation in schools, and facilitators addressing the stigma attached to mental health and mental illness**

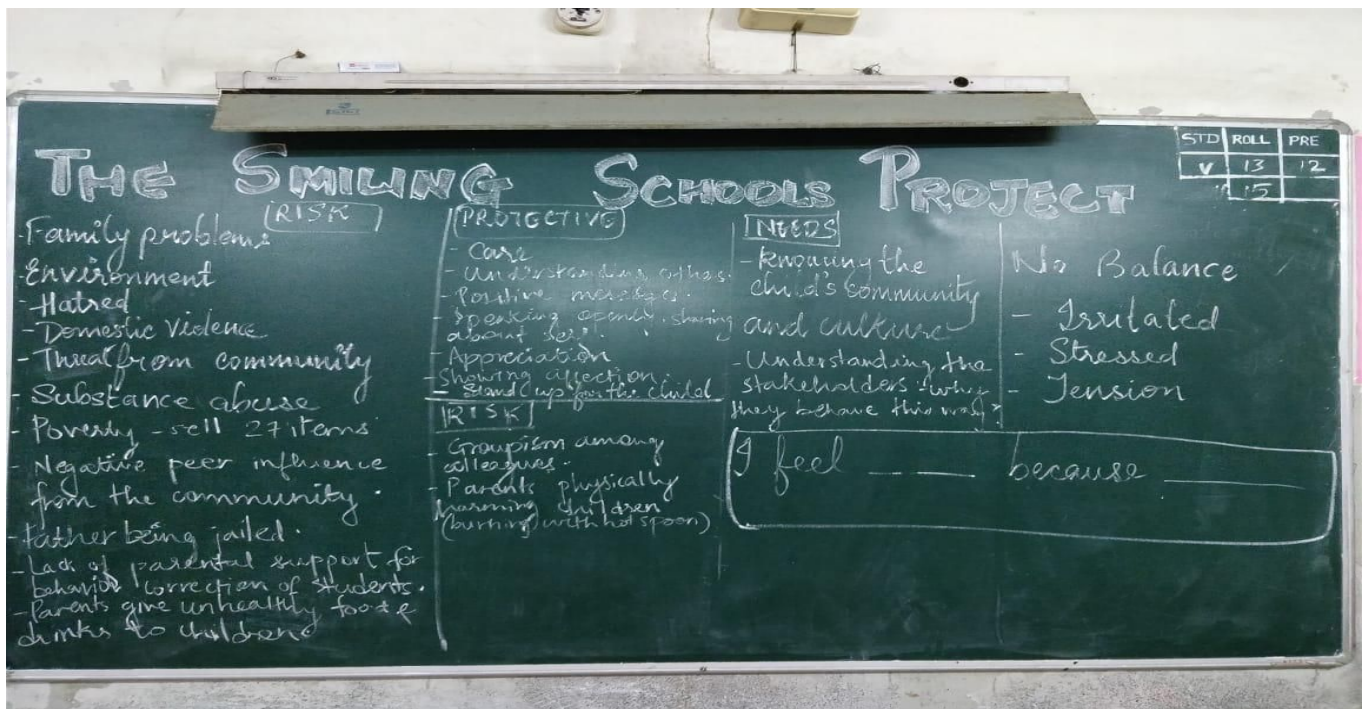




The introduction to mental health was followed by a discussion on school climate, and the link between school climate and mental health. In order to highlight this link, a case discussion was also facilitated. Participants discussed elements that contribute to making a school climate safe. Participants gave examples of their school's best practices, which they think are aligned to help them as well as help the beneficiaries of the school in maintaining good mental health.



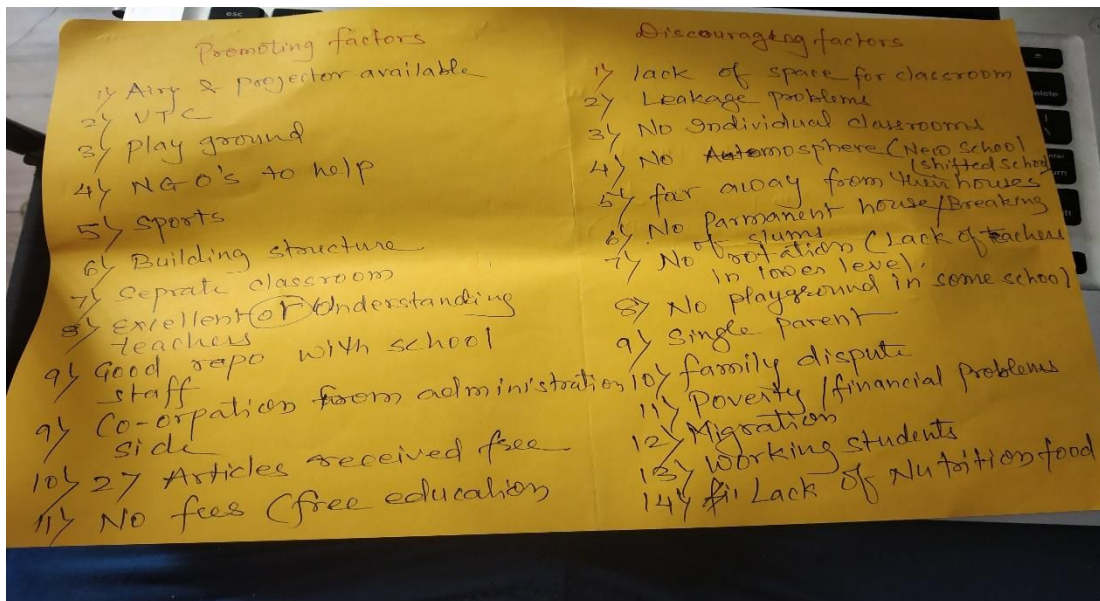
Participants reflecting and jotting down what their idea of school climate is. School climate was looked at from the point of view of all school stakeholders – principal, teachers, students, parents, and non-teaching staff





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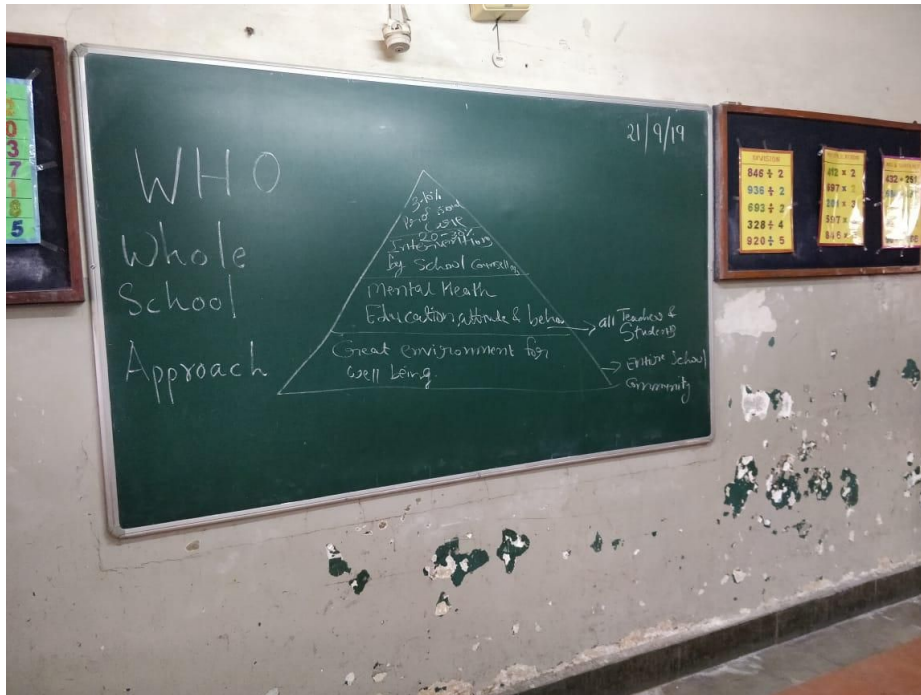
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**Participants discussing the case study of a student and brain-storming about the protective- and risk-factors of the school that will influence the students' mental health**

The discussion on the link between school climate and mental health was followed by providing a detailed explanation of the WHO Whole School approach. Facilitators presented the pyramid of the Whole School model and explained each stage in unique ways. Examples of this include brainstorming on the blackboard for each level of the WHO model, asking participants to plan activities for each level, watching videos to understand how schools around the world have adopted the WHO model to start classroom initiatives for mental health.





**The steps of the WHO Whole School model being explained with examples of what schools can do at each level**



**The WHO Whole School model being done through an activity wherein teachers plan for each level and climb the next step to indicate the next level of the model**

The WHO Whole School model was followed by a Needs Assessment through Circle Time. The Needs Assessment will form the basis for teachers to understand their students' needs in terms of school climate and then work on developing classroom initiatives. Facilitators helped participants to engage in a circle time of their own, by discussing their feelings about this training, and sharing their emotional state at that given moment, followed by an emotional antakshari (singing songs that depict their mood) and how such a session can be taken with students.



**Participants watching a video on Circle Time to understand the process and steps involved**



**Participants and facilitators discussing the basics of Circle Time as well as how such a session can be done with students**



The Needs Assessment through Circle Time was followed by how to develop classroom programs for mental health. In this session, participants were explained the steps for initiating classroom programs and were encouraged to make broad plans, which will be fine-tuned in the coming months with the help of the facilitators who will be their mentors.



**Participants engaging in discussion with the facilitators as to how to go about developing a program for mental health**



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Name of the facilitator: श्री. मधुला.सम. गोखर, श्री. उमेशचंद्र सिंह, श्री. रविगोवर्धन,  
 Name of the school: साधना इंवे  
 Grade: V  
 Date of the session: 20.09.2019  
 Objective of the session: चिह्नाना (C Teasing)  
 Name of the school: - नंदुरासम इंद्राणी, एस.एस. रोड, हिंदी, मोहिली 17  
 Materials required for the session: गिल्लेज हिंदी, तुमरे एम.पी.एस.

Time	Activity
30 मिनट	<p>→ <u>Teaching</u> - हाथों का ध्यान आकर्षित करने के लिए एक छोटी सी कुल्लिगीत गिना गया।</p> <p>→ <u>Emotion check</u> - सभी हाथों का Activity Song के बाद कवर वाली एडरी बनाई गई उसके बाद प्रत्येक कवर को नाम दिया गया जैसे, मुस्कान हो लाल, खेहर-खान, देवे अनेक प्रकार के रंग देकर उनको अपना, अपना</p>

- कवर देकर उनकी कवना-कवना की गई।

Discussion

कक्षा में हाथों को चिह्नाना के न करने पर एक छात्रों की चिह्नाना जल्दा देखा गया, कोई छात्र किसी को मोटा कहकर चिह्नाना है तो कोई फना कहकर चिह्नाना है इस प्रकार के चिह्नाने से बच्चे के मन पर बुरा प्रभाव पड़ेगी है।

समाप्ति

सभी बच्चों को छात्र पाठक-समा लेकर समझाया गया तथा इस मुद्दे पर चिन्ता दिखाया गया।

**An example of a plan to initiate a mental health program, made by a group of teachers for their classroom.**

The last segment of the workshop was on self-care. Participants were guided through a self-care script and were encouraged to discuss what they do for their self-care. New ideas were also shared for self-care. For example: keeping a child's photograph in the wallet, watching a video of sunset or the beach, write thoughts in a diary etc.





- proper sitting arrangement and ventilation
- Playground.
- ~~study~~ Digital classroom.
- Activities
- Games.
- celebration of various events/special days.
- story book.
- story.
- song
- action song.
- Prayer.
- meditation
- Yoga
- positive thinking.
- hobby — playground.

### **A list of self-care activities listed by a group of teachers**

#### **Process followed:**

1. Participants shared, in pairs, their ideas of mental health and what constitutes mental health. Their ideas were discussed in the larger group and listed on the blackboard.
2. Participants were introduced to the concept of safe climate. They discussed the link between school climate and mental health via a case discussion and by listing risk and protective school factors.
3. Participants were introduced to the WHO definition of mental health.



4. The mental health spectrum as a continuous line was introduced and participants were taken through the dynamic process of moving along the spectrum from health to distress to concerns.
5. Participants were helped to explore how the spectrum would be important in the context of their classroom and school by recognizing the need to support students who may be at different positions on the spectrum.
6. The WHO model was then introduced as a way to enhance school environment or climate. The four levels namely safe school climate, mental health awareness and education, interventions by school counsellors and professional treatment were discussed with relevant examples and videos.
7. The WHO model was primarily utilized for its emphasis on the role of Safe School Program in training teachers and supporting schools in developing programmes for mental health.
8. The role of teachers was also discussed in the process of creating a safe climate and a mental health friendly environment. For example: using appreciation, encouraging students as leaders, non-verbal communication, using humour appropriately.
9. A needs assessment format was discussed with the participants and also demonstrated. This was done through a Circle Time. Participants were directed to facilitate the same with students with relevant guidelines.
10. Participants were helped to create blueprints for their classroom mental health programs by following a template given by the facilitators. This was done through group discussions and presentations.



11. The workshop was concluded with a section on self-care. Participants discussed different self-care practises that they engage in as well as practised guided imagery in the session. Participants were requested to prioritize their mental and emotional health along with the mental health of their family and students.

**Highlights:**

1. Reflective practice throughout the workshop helped generate and share ideas on mental health, school climate, school best practices and the role of teachers in student mental health.
2. Engaging participants in pairs for discussions was an effective way to encourage participation from all participants.
3. The utilization of videos from the Indian context from films and other NGOs helped participants connect practice to theory.
4. Participants appreciated that the pre-test, handouts and the facilitation were done in multiple languages.
5. Referring to everyday examples to discuss distress and mental health concerns was useful in eliciting the subtle differences between these concepts and recognizing how one can move from distress to experiencing a concern.
6. Participants shared that the mental health spectrum is an innovative and useful way of conceptualizing mental health and helps in understanding the need for different actions for different needs.
7. Participants shared that the WHO model is easy to understand and relevant to their school settings.
8. The flow of the Teacher Training was easy and kept participants engaged throughout.
9. Demonstration of the Needs Assessment and discussing its relevance with students was an effective exercise in consolidating some of the learnings and reflections from the session.



10. Participants subjectively reported that the sessions was extremely informative and some of them recommended more frequent sessions on such topics and follow-up sessions too.



### Feedback from teachers:

1. The session was excellent. It will surely benefit us and students. The trainers took the session in a beautiful pattern.
2. Felt very relaxed throughout the session. I am taking home some positive constructive ideas. I will follow these suggestions
3. The training was very useful. It will help me to deal with the mental health of my students
4. It was very useful to find out the problems of the child and also how to help the child to overcome the problems
5. Problems and Solutions regarding school, students, and students' emotions were discussed effectively by Trainers. Trainers were well prepared and gave good guidance. Active participation was encouraged.

**Table No 1 : Feedback - Teachers' orientation**

**N= 118**

Question	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Blank
Participation and interaction was encouraged	116	0	1	1
The topics covered were relevant to me	111	0	6	1
The content was organized and easy to follow	108	0	9	1
The material provided was helpful	110	0	8	0
The training experience will be useful to me	113	0	4	1



**Recommendations from teachers:**

1. Requirement of counsellors in MCGM schools
2. Lesser administrative duties for teachers
3. Some support system for teachers' own mental health