

20 Mumbai Schools Join The Mental Health Movement At 'The Happy Place'

Mpower (Aditya Birla Education Trust), a champion of mental health and Aditya Birla World Academy co-hosted India's first student-led inter-school mental health festival called 'The Happy Place' where young students came together and shared their unique thoughts and ideas about the mental health movement in India.

The Aditya Birla World Academy hosted 20 schools in Mumbai including J.B Petit High School, Cathedral and John Connon School, Greenlawns High School, B.D Somani International School, Navy School in Mumbai.

In its first ever edition, 'The Happy Place' witnessed over 150 young participants coming together to talk about mental health wellness in India through workshops, engaging activities and creative competitions across 2-days over the weekend. Students of various groups across Grades 8-12, brought their unique energy, ideas, talents, and passion, to deeply engage with the topic of mental health through varied academic and artistic media. This included – dance movement therapy, street plays, photography, filmmaking, singing, research proposal poster competition and writing. Mental Health is a topic that is more often than not, shrouded in stigma and misconception. This causes the topic to be relegated to the periphery of our collective awareness. The brainchild of Neerja Birla and Ananya Birla, Mpower endeavours to be the movement to affect change and proactively champion mental health causes, create awareness, advocate prevention and provide



Mrs. Neerja Birla and the children at The Happy Place

services with a professional, holistic and multi-disciplinary approach. 'The Happy Place' initiative co-hosted by Mpower was the ideal platform for an alliance of Mumbai's educational institutions to provide the required stimulus to steer the conversation on mental health in a positive direction. With this unique approach, Mpower and Aditya Birla World Academy aim to pave the way for future change-makers who will propel the mental health revolution forward.

Commenting on this joint initiative, Neerja Birla, Chairperson and Co-founder, Mpower Minds, said, "The Happy Place is a pioneering student led initiative. More conversation about mental health, amongst the youth is the absolute need of the hour, which is why we have created this association between Mpower and Aditya Birla World Academy to launch The Happy Place. It is a one of a kind event. We

aspire to create awareness about mental health and its importance via the artistic medium. I am inspired by the creativity of young minds."

Radhika Sinha, Principal, Aditya Birla World Academy, said, "I would say, an education is not just about teaching a child to read, write and be good at arithmetic. It is more about imbibing values, a sense of responsibility, coping mechanisms, self-discipline and reflection. These skills may not get assessed on standardized testing, but as children plot their journey into adulthood, they are, by far, the most important life skills we could equip them with."

Akanksha Madan, 11 IB, Student at the Aditya Birla World Academy, said, "The Happy Place was a unique experience that has brought to the forefront issues we don't usually discuss. What has made it even more special is that we've done this in a way!"