

# Promoting mental Health Awareness in schools in Bangladesh

## Progress report

Report prepared by: Innovation for Wellbeing Foundation

Report prepared for: SiTara's Story

Reporting period: March to September 20<sup>th</sup> 2018

### Achievement at a glance:

Activity	Total Target for 5 schools	Target for 3 schools	Actual achievement	Reason for deviation
Mental Health First Aid Training for Teachers	150	90	69 ( 3 schools)	There was less teachers available for the 2 days course
Workshop with students on anti-bullying	150	90	109 (3 schools)	Target exceeded for 3 schools
Workshop with Parents on positive parenting	150	90	93 ( 3 schools)	Target exceeded for 3 schools

### Unplanned intervention due to responding to the demand of the situation:

Activity	Number of people reached	Description of the activities
Trauma Management workshop with Students (Young Protestors for Road safety Campaign)	21	Responding to an immediate needs of the students protesting for road safety movement, in consultation with SiTara's Story, a workshop with students have been arranged on acute trauma management. Three numbers of group counseling sessions were conducted with 21 student aged between 13 and 17 to help them to deal with stress, anxiety and acute trauma caused by witnessing a road accident where they lost their classmates and while they were on the street for 7 days demanding for justice and road safety measures through a creative and peaceful demonstrations, they have been attacked by the police and political goons. Due to political restriction, the intervention could not be publicize and kept in low profile.

Mental Health Support to women labor returned from Saudi Arabia	1	Responding to an emergency request from BRAC, IWF provided mental health assessment of a woman returned from Saudi Arabia on 20 <sup>th</sup> September 2018. The women returned with severe psychotic episode, and self-harm. IWF admitted her in a private clinic for further assessment and proper treatment. The case demonstrates that women returned from Saudi Arabia are often subject to torture (sexual, physical, economic and psychological) and have shown some sorts of symptoms of acute trauma, stress, depression and anxiety, suicidal and self-harm and psychosis. There is no provision of emergency mental health support to these returnees while BRAC an NGO provide some support to return them to their family. However, the case referred to IWF had severe psychiatric illness, prone to doing self-harm and harming others. She was difficult to manage and therefore needed a hospital admission. Due to non-availability of the family, the patient did not comply with the criteria for admission in National Mental health Institute (NIMH). Therefore, she was admitted in a private clinic until the family is found and come to Dhaka. IWF is bearing the cost of her treatment for mental illness.
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This is the first time we are receiving any training on how to deal with mental health issues of our students. The training on mental health first aid is not only helpful to support our students but also to deal with our own burnout. This training should be arranged on a regular basis for all teachers.  
Head Teacher, Hazi Gani School, Mativanga, Nazirpur, Pirojpur District

I do not know how to read and write, I never took part in any meeting like this. For the first time I have drawn my hand on a piece of paper along with others. It was such a joy to find my own handprint among others. I have realized that taking care of my own emotional needs will help me to communicate better with my children. A mother of a student of class ten from Hazi Gani School

It was so much fun to make a script and role play on how to protect me from sexual abuse. The subject is difficult to talk but we often encounter. Role play and games were an effective way to discuss sensitive issues. I really appreciate madam Umme Kawser for teaching us on 'STOP' activities to protect me from any abuse. A student of class ten from Hazi Gani School.

Everyone took oath today that we will avoid negative words to name a person with mental illness. Mental Illness is like physical illness and no one is immune from mental illness. A teacher from Adarsha Lipi Bidya Pith, Chanda Para, Ward 14, Gazipur City Corporation

This is raining cats and dog today, but I am so happy that I joined today's workshop on positive parenting. I often had difficulties to manage with the emotional ups and down of my 15 years old

daughter. Now I understand this is natural manifestation of an adolescent. I often said to her that she is becoming 'beadop' but now I see that I need to change my own way of communication with her too. Not only disciplining her but also listening to her and appreciating her time to time when she does good things for herself and for the family. A mother from Adarsha Lipi Bidya Pith, Chanda Para, Ward 14, Gazipur City Corporation

Look, the day is coming after each night, but I do not see any change in my mental health. If I am not happy, how can I make others happy? A mother from Modhumoti Adarsho Bidyaloy, Pahardnaga, Saraspur, Kalia, Narail District.

Annexure-1:

**Innovation for Wellbeing Foundation**  
**Protocol on Anti bullying campaign with students**

**Objective**

The main aspire of this workshop is to teach school children and adolescents how to deal with bullying in healthy way and to raise awareness and increase understanding and create safe plans of how to respond to bullying. The workshop helps to identify cause of it and emotional state when one experiences it. It also helps to understand of negative consequences of unhealthy dealing with bullying.

**Time-3 hours**

**Group size: 20 to 30 students from class 6 to 10**

**Session plan:**

**Step 1: Ground rules (05 min)**

In a plenary set three particular ground rules for the workshop.

1. Respect each participant: Don't take part in side conversations; listen and ask clarifying questions.

2. Keep phones on silent or vibrate mode during the session

3 Confidentiality: Everyone has to promise not to reveal any confidential information (personal or work) about any other participant in the workshop. This is a promise from each participant of this workshop to all other participants of this workshop. All information one hears from or about any participant in the workshop will be considered. Confidential Information, unless that participant says that it is not confidential. Such Confidential Information may be personal or professional. This also applies to any recording of this workshop.

**Step 2: Introduction (20 min)**

Ask each of them to stand in circle. Ask one by one to take a step forward from their position and tell their name, which class s/he is from, where do they live, their parent's name or how many siblings they have etc.

After completion of the introduction, you can conclude that we have difference and similarity in the group and this is natural.

**Step-3: (15 min): Tolerance and Respect Game**

An anti-bullying game based on student's preferences and choices. It illustrates how one student will make a statement such as, 'Everyone who likes ice cream, make a circle around me,' and ice cream lovers obey. Then the next person calls. When the game is over, the facilitator asks the students to identify one new thing they learned about another student that wasn't already known. The game demonstrates diversity and similarity shared by all students, and helps children learn to be tolerant of others.

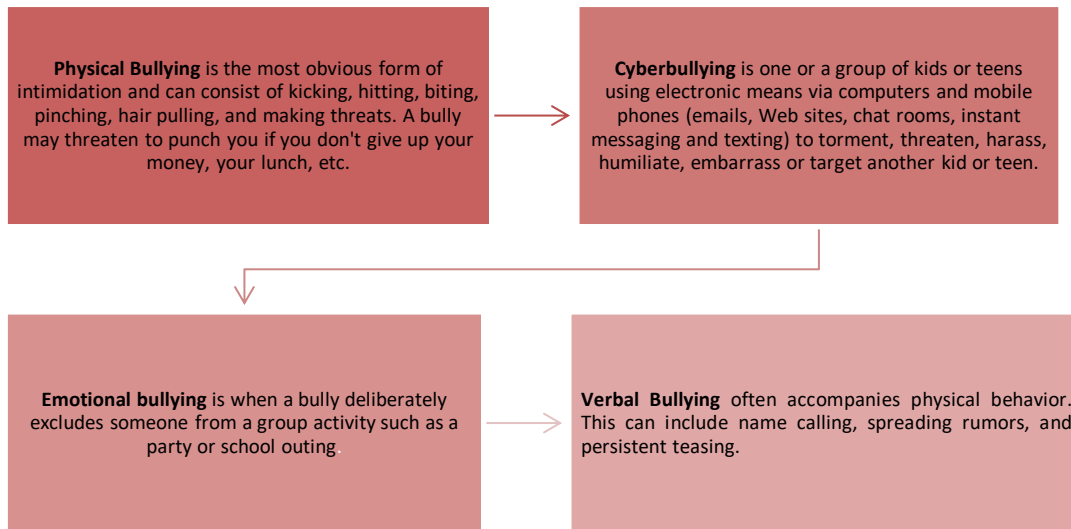
#### **Step 4: Talking about what is Bullying? (20 min)**

Ask participants to discuss what the term 'Bullying' means to them for a few minutes. Get people to share and feedback on the large group. If no-one raises it, ensure that the distinction between eve-teasing and bullying is made.

Bullying is "intimidation of a weaker person: the process of intimidating or mistreating somebody weaker or in a more vulnerable situation". The synonyms of bullying are threats, mistreatment, domination, harassment, victimization, maltreatment, hounding. Eve teasing is a [euphemism](#) used throughout [South Asia](#), which includes (but is not limited to) [India](#), [Pakistan](#), [Bangladesh](#) and [Nepal](#) for public [sexual harassment](#) or [molestation](#) of women by men.

#### **Step 5: Bullying comes in various forms (30 min)**

Role-play scenario is to demonstrate different types of bullying



#### **Step 6: Saying "STOP" to bullying (20 min)**

Ask participants to work in pair. The objective is to practice saying "STOP" when a bullying occurs. For example, "How would you say STOP if someone tries to give you a punch? The key is in letting kids saying STOP assertively in a confident, casual voice.

#### **Step: 7 The 9/6 Perspective (15 min) for making kids understand the concept of Empathy**

The exercise is very simple. The facilitator writes a figure boldly on a piece of paper, sets it on the floor, and makes the entire students circle around. Then facilitator makes two groups stand on either side of the floor and ask them what they understands to be written on the paper. Without fail, one would say “9” and the other would say “6.” Then the facilitator asks if they are sure. Then the facilitator would ask the rest of the class, “Well, who’s right?” This would result in multiple voices speaking up “They both are!” “It depends!” “If you’re on either side, it looks right!” And so on and eventually everyone would put words around the reality that each “side” shows their own truth, though the answers were completely different. But it is still their truth. To

**Key Messages:** How we see things matters, where we are coming from matters. And the same goes for the other person.

**Step 8: Role-playing games to teach children how to interact with others in various abusive classroom situations. (45 mins)**

Make it interactive with each child participating in role playing scenarios. This activity helps a child to integrate the knowledge into practice. Role-play has been a common training method for good reason. Role playing puts participants directly into situations that they will face in the real lives. Training becomes a hands-on experience and encourages the participants to apply skill sets more effectively than a training manual. When a participant in a role-playing session pretends to be the prospect, he or she can easily see the situation from another side, which will increase the participant’s empathy as well. Role-playing provides a safe environment to encounter these scenarios for the first time, which builds confidence in participants that can help them in their day-to-day roles.

**Guidelines for Role-Play:**

Use actual locations: The best role-play is as realistic as possible. Put participants in the physical locations where they actually would experience the scenarios you’re trying to replicate, whether that’s the boardroom, the warehouse, or school.

Videotape your role-play: Videotaping the participants in role-playing scenarios is a valuable teaching tool. It allows people to see themselves—and their strengths and weaknesses, which can be quite powerful. It also allows them (and you) to “record” improvement as they progress.

Develop listening skills: Good role-playing requires good listening skills. In addition to understanding the words the other person is saying, it’s important to pay attention to body language and non-verbal clues. Better to have your team develop these skills while role-playing than when they’re trying to perform in the real world.

Playing scenarios contain the following questions:

What is it about this person that makes them a target for bullying? (This is a sensitive question as it may wrongly clarified that girls should not do thing like this or talk like this or act like this). It is important to clarify the objectives here.

Can (or should) they do anything differently?

What can they do to protect themselves?

**Step 9: Wrap up (10 min)**

Asking participants how effective the workshop was and how would they act differently from now on.  
Finally close the session by thanking them.

Annexure-2:

## **Innovation for Wellbeing Foundation**

### **Positive Parenting session protocol with Grass root People**

Introduction:

A safe and engaging environment must be ensured for children of all ages. In order to promote a safe environment for healthy development, this principle is essential.

Besides a safe environment, children also need a positive learning environment. Parents are children's first teacher and set an example (right or wrong) in everything that they do. They teach the kids how to walk, how to speak and how to socialize. Parents need to positively respond to their child's needs and interactions.

The next principle is to use assertive discipline. The right management strategies must be used to discipline children. Instead of physical punishment, parents are taught to use more effective strategies. These strategies include the setting up of rules for specific situations, discussing these rules with children, using quiet time and time outs, etc.

Sometimes parents have unrealistic expectations for their children. This could lead to parents abusing and neglecting their children. Having realistic expectations helps children to appropriately develop.

The last principle is to take care of oneself as a parent. Being a parent can be stressful. It is important to encourage parents to view parenting as part of a larger context related to self-care, resourcefulness, well-being and maintaining self-esteem.

#### **Objective of the workshop:**

Objective of the session is to educate parents about how to deal with children in healthy way and make aware of positive parenting. It also helps to understand of negative consequences of unhealthy dealing with children.

**Time:** Three hours

**Materials:** A4 paper for each participant and marker pen or different types of water color and a big canvas hang on the wall.

**Methodology:**

**Step -1:**

Explain that this is a participant centered workshop and the success of the session will only be depending on the active participation of all participants. Emphasize that we will talk about personal experiences which require confidentiality and respect to each other.



## Step-2:

Ask participants what they understand about positive parenting. After getting individual views from their day to day experience, analyze the problem situation from psychological, social, and cultural perspective.

## Step-3:

Demonstrate role plays of negative and positive parenting. Choose or invite to volunteer participants to take part in role play. Determine the script with the participants and roles for both negative and positive parenting. (This may need a little elaboration for someone who has not seen the role play that you have done). The facilitator also can pause, clarify, give feedback and replay the scenarios. Finally, facilitator will ask each of them to reflect about the role play.

There are a few example questions that one needs to explore as a facilitator:

To the observers:

What did you notice most about the role-play? Can you identify one thing that stood out?

Why do you think the role-players behaved the way they did?

Would you have behaved differently in the same situation?

Did you notice any problems? What was the cause of the problems?

Looking back on the role-play, what solutions would you suggest?

To the role-players:

How did you feel during the role-play? Did your feelings change? Why was that?

What was the most difficult part of the role-play and how did you overcome this?

Reflecting back, is there anything you would have done differently

## Step-4:

Teach parents 5 Ways to Achieve Positive Parenting

Below are some easy ways to interact with your child in a positive manner on daily basis:

- “Catch” your child in a positive behavior and praise them for that. For example tell them “you have done a good job!” rather telling that “you are a good girl!”. Separate behavior from the person’s identity.
- Limit words such as ‘don’t’ or ‘no’
- Teach positive behaviors instead of telling your child what not to do
- Set limits and expectations

- Show by yourself the behavior you would like to see your child exhibit
- Play with your child as much as your time permits play is important in a child's development
- Ask open ended questions and listen to your child by making eye contact
- Don't be afraid to get down on the child's level. Sometimes getting into a chair or on the floor with your child can be better for both parent and child
- Use your patience, take a deep breath, count to ten .Don't take your anger out on the child

#### Step-5: Care for Caregivers

It is not selfish for a parent to focus on own needs and desires. It is an important part of the job in parenting as it helps to manage own stress that makes the parenting more effective and enjoyable.

#### Hand print self-care exercise:

This exercise will help parents to feel important also they will learn that each child is unique just like each participants handprint so it is not wise to compare his or her child with any other child considering this uniqueness and individual differences.

Provide each participant with aA4 paper and demonstrate them placing their hands firmly and ask them to make handprints writing their names in the middle. Supervise that each participant is doing the same.

After the exercise ask participants to reflect on the following points:

What do you notice about the different handprints?

Are they all the same?

How do you feel while making handprint and writing own name?

Step six is closure: The facilitator will close the session by taking feedbacks from the participants and by thanking them for their active participation.

#### Important reading-1:

##### 1. Modeling

Have you ever played peek-a-boo with your child and then they start doing it back to you? Our children learn from everything we do and our actions directly impact them and how they choose to behave.

Our kids are continuously watching us and even if they're not, we should certainly act like they are. If you want your kid to develop manners, you need to model them.

If you want your kid to share, you should demonstrate sharing with them. Children evolve within the environment they are brought up in and modeling appropriate behavior influences positive behavior.

## 2. Play

As a kid, “house” is a common game children would play. Children would make their mom hold the plastic pots and spoons, stirring imaginary curry. It might just seem like a simple game, but in reality, it develops the child’s brain and teaches them basically how to do in life.

Play is a vital component to developing the child cognitively, socially, and emotionally. It allows you to connect with your child.

Here are some tips on play and ways to implement them:

Story-time: make up a happy story and engage your child in the story telling. Ensure you grow a bedtime reading or telling story habit from early childhood. Choose stories that promote kindness, values and imagination through fun and creative way.

Play indoor and outdoor: like ludu, carom, chess, kana machi, lukochuri, ekkadokka etc. you can engage other children of neighbor-hood and arrange football and cricket match.

Play school: let your child be the teacher, and you, the student

Play Household chores ( rannabatikhela): Play with your kid to cook, clean and wash, organize things at home and how to show hospitality through entertaining each other. You may like to invite your Kid’s friends for these play and can arrange picnic ( choruivati)

## 3. Social Interaction

“Never fear spoiling children by making them too happy. Happiness is the atmosphere in which all good affections grow.” Thomas Bray

Developing and maintaining friendships allow children to grow. Social interaction provides advances in social skills, emotional intelligence, and cognitive development. Whether, it’s just a few hours at the park or a play date with a friend, you’re giving your child the chance to interact with the world and life itself.

It can also be used as a means of learning. They will learn to share and when to use appropriate behaviors, as well as when not to. Through playing with other kids will help them grow leadership skills, communication and negotiation skills and how to overcome challenges assertively.

Positive parenting if done correctly builds positive emotions and heightens self-esteem in parent and child, not just the child.

In many ways we could say that today’s challenges with behavioral problem, discipline in life, violence and drug abuse are directly related to yesterday’s parenting. But whether that is true or not is irrelevant, since “yesterday was a different world,” says Louise a mental health counseling expert.

## 4. Talk and Listen

Maintaining a close positive relationship ensures that your child is comfortable in confiding with you, as he or she should be. It is important to be an avid participant in your child's life.

Also, actively listening to them when they come and talk to you is important in maintaining this positive relationship. Encourage your child to ask you questions. This will result in your child being comfortable to come to you now and even later in life.

The earlier years of your child's development are most important for developing this positive relationship.

Could you please add an exercise here on nonjudgmental and active listening to children and also with adolescent children?

## 5. Positive Relationship with Your Partner

It is crucial to realize that your child is a mirror image of the way you hold yourself and your relationship with your partner. They notice the way you both act when you're around each other and this could positively or negatively impact your child's development, believe it or not.

Enough times, children are brought up in an emotionally abusive home and this negatively affects how they think and feel.

Important reading-2:

### 10 Reasons to Embrace Positive Parenting

There are many benefits to taking a positive, intuitive approach to your parenting style. The main ones being a happy home and your children feeling appreciated and respected, 10 other reasons include:

#### 1. A More Peaceful Home

Positive parenting leads to peaceful parents, which leads to more peaceful children. If power struggles are a problem in your home, this approach greatly reduces them. Punitive approaches create conflict which put you against your children. With positive parenting you work with them to promote better behavior, which naturally leads children to fight less for their autonomy and you to struggle less for control. Open communication and peaceful resolution are the keys.

#### 2. More Confident Kids

Children receiving positive parenting are more confident than those parented by other methods. While punitive parenting focuses on their faults and shortcomings, which often leads to low self-confidence. Positive parenting focuses on the behaviors you want from your child as well as their successes. This focus builds a healthy sense of self-esteem and self-confidence, which are essential for your child to grow into a happy adult.

#### 3. More Confidence in Your Parenting Skills

Positive parenting is about doing what feels right. When you follow your instincts, you feel like a better parent. Have you ever punished your child and felt terrible about it? Perhaps you even went into another room and cried because doing so broke your heart. If it makes you feel that bad, there has to be a better way. And there is!

When you positively parent your child, you trust your instincts. This confidence comes through to your children. Being confident in your parenting abilities is part of what makes your child feel safe and secure. If you feel like you don't know what you are doing, your child will pick up on that.

Ever notice how an infant responds when someone who isn't confident with them tries to hold them? They cry. When they hand the crying baby over to someone who is confident in what to do, they calm down. If infants can sense this confidence, so can older children.

#### 4. A Stronger Parent-Child Relationship

Punishing a child teaches them they can't trust you as you might hurt them. Whether this pain is emotional or physical, children don't understand that you are trying to do what is best for them. Our children were not born knowing the rules. They only understand what we teach them and if it is hurtful, all they know is that the person they love the most has hurt them. This leads to mistrust in the relationship.

Trust is an essential part of the parent-child relationship. When you tell your child "it will be okay" you want them to believe you. You want them to know they can count on you when they need you. Without trust in you, your child has no sense of a safe centre from which to explore. They feel a deep seated insecurity and mistrust of the world that affects them well into adulthood.

#### 5. Fewer Behavioral Issues

Children parented positively have fewer behavioral issues. This is because of modeling. Children act out what they learn from you in the home. If punitive or aggressive behaviors (even simple verbal threats) are used at home, your children are more likely to display these behaviors in other environments. This is especially true for children with any sort of developmental delay or disorder like A.D.D. or autism

Act the way you would like them to act, with kindness, consideration and emotional intelligence. There are many tips for dealing with difficult behaviors which can help you create cooperative relationships through a loving approach.

#### 6. Less Aggressive

Studies show that children of negative parents are more likely to be aggressive than those from positive parenting households. This is again due to modelling the behaviors they see at home. If your child learns how to manage their frustration and anger through open communication without punishment they will be less likely to act aggressively towards others.

#### 7. Fostering Independence and Self-Control

Positive parenting is about encouraging and teaching good behavior in children. It also encourages them to behave not out of fear of punishment, but out of a desire to feel good. When you use negative discipline, your child may behave, but it will be out of fear. But what happens when your child grows up and no longer fears your consequences?

You want your children to learn to manage their impulses because it is the “right” thing to do, not out of fear of being punished. You want them to learn that they get a good feeling (positive reinforcement) when they do a good thing. This is how they can develop self-control and a clear sense of right and wrong, which will serve them throughout their lifetime.

## 8. Happier Kids

Kids with positive parents tend to be happier than those from punitive parents. Studies have shown a link between “negative” parenting and depression in the teen years and even into adulthood. Those children from positive parents have a much lower incidence of depression. This is as a result of children having higher self-esteem, and more positive relationships with their parents as well as others.

## 9. More Empathetic

When you positively parent, you model empathy for your child. Instead of engaging them in what not to do, you let them know you understand how they feel, this is the seed of empathy. The best way to teach your child this important skill is by example. You will soon notice your child showing empathy, too. Perhaps they will show kindness by giving a friend a hug or sharing their favorite toy. You’ll know it when you see it, and it will make it all worth it.

## 10. Less Stress

Conscious positive parenting allows you to relax and enjoy your children. When you have a peaceful home with no power struggles and kids who actually want to do the right thing, you spend more time enjoying them instead of constantly trying to keep them out of trouble. You can play, become creative in the way you teach your kids how to be happy. This is the greatest advantage of positive parenting! After all, they are only little for a short time, spend that precious time with them wisely.

## A Take Home Message

Positive parenting is considerably difficult, but with enough time and energy, it is the best way to be a parent. The outcomes of positive parenting are nothing but beneficial to both the parent and the child.

Being a parent is arguably the hardest job on earth and not every person expects to become a parent, but some do. It is no simple task, but the reward it offers is priceless and I am sure no parent would trade that for anything.