

Celebrating World Mental Health Day

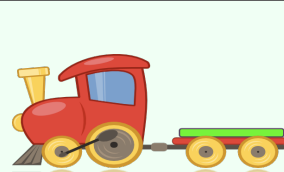
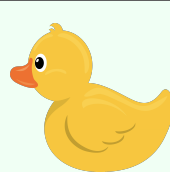
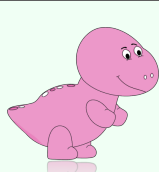
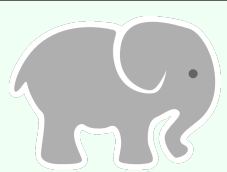
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Little Pods Anniversary

Theme 2018: YOUNG PEOPLE AND MENTAL HEALTH
IN A CHANGING WORLD

India is taking leap of faith wherein, more than 20 percent of young Indian populations is likely to suffer with one or another mental health problems, like depression, anxiety, eating disorder, substance abuse, etc. Most of these are never recognised and given the right kind of attention. Owing to the over-dependency on the social media and newer lifestyle options the struggle to cope up with obvious challenges further predisposes them to wide range of issues.

Talking about youth mental health

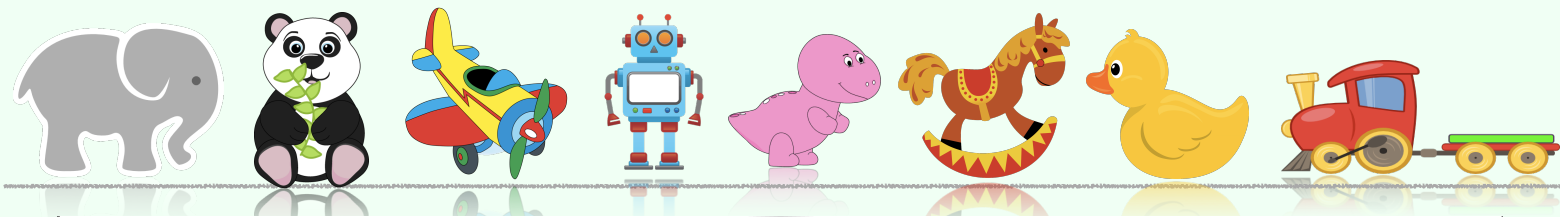




Pods squad had a great year; with being recognised as the “**Company of the month**” by Silicon India and listed as **top 10** most promising parenting classes 2018.

We shared **50 Positive things you can say to your Child**; and are overwhelmed with the response.

We have extended our love and care though various services for children coping with terminal illness. This year has been filled with opportunities and challenges making us stronger in our motto.



COMPANY OF THE MONTH

LITTLE PODS: CONTENDING SPECIAL-NEED LIMITATIONS WITH PROFOUND PROFESSIONALISM

By Imelda Tarzarina

Reshaping the practice of special education has been a continuous venture in the mental health system. According to the TOI report 2017, 50 million children in India under the age of 15 are with or at risk of developmental disabilities. Though the option of inclusion shines as the silver-lining that aids children with special needs to challenge their limitations, the professional structure of the country's mental health system and the number of specialized doctors poses a weak link when it strikes reality. Little Pods came into existence a few years ago when its director Kirti Shah, a thoroughly experienced Counselor and a Clinical & Forensic Psychologist who has worked extensively with children with special-needs, realized the dire need to give them a platform with relevant services. As she noticed positive responses from children while having one-on-one therapy sessions with them in their natural-settings, Little Pods framed the basis of its establishment surpassing and creating unparalleled services in the field of child psychology.

Catering to children mainly with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Down syndrome, and Intellectual Deficit, along with others like Specific Learning Disabilities and



Kirti Shah, Director

Genetical Disorders, the organization poised itself on the higher end of the spectrum by working without compromising on quality and developing tailor-made programs that soon drew over 100 children and a 35 all-women employees within a short span of time. With a success story that follows, “We have children who required shadow teachers, but today are independent without one and coping well in the school setup,” asserts Kirti.

Tackling the biggest hurdle faced by the industry – absence of a formal education and practical training at the academic level, Kirti

became the first in India to frame a professional training module to train professionals thoroughly on Child Psychology and related therapy. Likewise, to deal with the stigma attached to Indian parents' mind who refuse to acknowledge the fact that their children have special-needs & concerns, Little Pods pioneered the at-school & in-home approach in India to refine the children's learning skills with the right support, which enabled it to forge a stellar reputation. To Kirti's surprise, this approach gained immense acceptance from international schools and more so from the parents.

Fostering Children with Professionalism

A deeper understanding on this regard sets forth when a Shadow-Teacher, for instance who operates like a personal therapist, accompanies the child at a school set-up, availing behavior modification, remediation and social skills training to meet their long-term goal of making the child independent. Similarly, a child with underdeveloped behavior or sensory issues is pre home-schooled before getting into an inclusive school. Home-schooling is also

Little Pods rigorously trains their employees on their established-modules so as to enhance better professional and practical proficiency

Key Management:

Kirti Shah, Director

A Clinical & Forensic Psychologist, Kirti has worked extensively with children as a counselor independently and has also been associated with various organizations. She has a thorough academic background and immense experience to deal with children and adults as a mental health professional.

Ashwini Deshpande Nagarhalli, Head Clinical Psychologist

M.Phil. in Clinical Psychology approved by the Rehabilitation Council of India, Ashwini has worked intensively in the field of mental health. Her accuracy in assessment and diagnostic skills add-on to her effective intervention planning and execution. Her areas of work have been awarded with a number of awards, including gold medals by The Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad University, Baroda, for her outstanding academic performance.

Stephanie George, Mumbai Co-ordinator

Stephanie is a certified Rational Emotive Behavior Therapist with masters in Clinical Psychology. Before joining Little Pods, she was associated with a REBT practitioner. Currently with Little Pods, she is incharge of training and guiding Little Pods team with an effective goal-oriented approach.

Office: Mumbai

made available for those physically or terminally ill children to perk-up the right kind of cognitive exposure.

Apart from these remarkable services, Little Pods continues to assist the child by setting-up training sessions for parents considering the fact that the parent is the one who assists the child at every aspect or stage in the child's life. “What we believe as ideal is that transforming the parents into therapists (not literally) with a lot of training and a hand-holding. Hence, we provide them assessment-based tailor-made schedules on a weekly basis for creating positive impacts to aid the child to cope better,” explains Ashwini Deshpande (Head Clinical Psychologist at Little Pods). For parents in small towns, these services are rendered via online mediums.

Broadening Prospects

Little Pods rigorously trains their employees on their established-modules so as to enhance better professional and practical proficiency. The team constantly grows imbibing knowledge from professionals of various domains like Pediatricians, Homoeopaths, Physiotherapists and others that rotate around children with special needs. Thus providing larger scope with tailor-made 360-degree training programs and openarms to welcome newbies on-board with similar interests, and additionally boosting growth, the company aims at reaching 55 employees by the next financial year.

Envisioning an expansion to smaller towns with poor professional facilities, the organization aspires to initiate a virtual professional aid before setting-up firm grounds in these areas. With its services measuring up to no match in its field, Little Pods weaves out a system that creates an opportunity for these children to live beyond their limitations. 