



Pearson

The Mind's *Eye*



Dear Colleague,

I am elated with the enthusiastic response we received for the first issue of this newsletter! I hope we continue to live up to your expectation for content that educates, informs and most importantly highlights the status quo for mental-health care in our country. Children often have to bear the brunt of inadequate mental-health infrastructure in schools. The importance of timely identification and intervention for conditions such as LD, ADHD or emotional difficulties cannot be emphasized enough.

At PCTA, we've realized, schools need to have easy access to high quality mental-health services for special and regular classrooms, so that students are supported where and when it matters. Our services arm, Pearson Academy India (PAI), works closely with schools through PAI partners, to deliver screening, assessment and intervention services. Whether a school has a functioning special education division/counselling center, or is just starting out in this direction, PAI services are bound to help.

I hope we see more schools looking beyond infrastructure that aids learning, to infrastructure that addresses barriers to learning, and signing with us. With your help, we can move forward our mission to change the future of mental-health care in this subcontinent.



Warm Regards
Philip Kurian - Country Manager, PCTA



Professional Speak

Children at Risk for Dyslexia: School Professionals' Role in Early Detection and Support

Children with learning disabilities constitute the largest and fastest growing population among those with developmental disabilities. The steep increase in prevalence occurs due to lack of early literacy skills and emphasis on rote learning in educational curricula. Dyslexia is the most common form of learning disability and refers to a disorder where despite possessing average intelligence and receiving a conventional classroom education, children are unable to acquire adequate skills related to reading, writing and spelling. With each passing year of school, academic demands become complex and gradually take priority over extra-curricular activities. In this phase, a dyslexic child's limitations result in significant struggles to cope with studies. The child feels distressed and helpless, resulting in low self-esteem and isolation from peers. In some cases the child also becomes an object of ridicule from peers and may be labelled mischievous, stubborn or uncooperative by teachers and parents.

About the author:

Dr. Nitin Anand is Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology at National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS), Bangalore. He holds M.PHIL and PH.D degrees in Clinical Psychology from NIMHANS. In his past roles, Dr. Anand worked as a consultant clinical psychologist and product developer for psychological assessments. His research expertise lie in learning disabilities and cognitive behavioral intervention for anxiety disorders. He can be reached at nitinanand19800@gmail.com

School professionals such as general and special classroom teachers, when trained to administer screening tests, can play a significant role in early detection and support of children who are struggling with dyslexia. Early detection can lay the path for creating a stimulating, yet understanding and accommodative learning environment, where fair and appropriate opportunities are provided to the dyslexic child for better personal and academic outcomes.

These screening tests, when adapted and standardized to the Indian population of school children, offer more accurate results to drive support and intervention. Moreover, tests that can be administered by a wide array of professionals in a school set up such as school teachers, special educators, school counselors and psychologists, ensuring a wider net of children are screened for dyslexia, and at the right time.

Following screening and a possible diagnosis of dyslexia, integration of such children with mainstream classrooms, rather than exclusion, should be the focus of our educational system, to the best possible extent. General classroom teachers can contribute to integrating these children by building sensitivity in the class, guidance and academic concessions. Teachers can help dyslexic children set realistic academic goals, divide tasks into smaller units, read text clearly and at a slower pace, encourage verbal responses to questions and provide additional time for writing tests. Parents can spend time during off-school hours with their child to help improve the child's self-esteem. They can encourage the child to participate in group tasks, offer opportunities for peer interaction, appreciate small gains and help identify the child's strengths in extra-curricular tasks. In addition, parent-teacher forums can be effective in creating awareness and support within the school and in the society, at large. Informed and supportive school professionals, who work closely with parents, are two set of irreplaceable assets for children struggling to overcome academic and personal challenges associated with dyslexia.

Professional Of The Month

Dr. Samir Parikh

Dr. Samir Parikh is a leading psychiatrist who has been instrumental in establishing mental health as a core specialty in India's leading healthcare chains.

Dr. Parikh is currently Director, Department of Mental Health and Behavioural Sciences, at Fortis Healthcare, New Delhi and leads the National Mental Healthcare Program at Fortis. Under his leadership, the department provides clinical services in Psychiatry, Psychology, Psychoanalysis, Art Therapy, Special Education and Occupational Therapy. He is a well-known speaker at national and international forums and has established various academic initiatives for psychologists. With his holistic vision for mental health, Dr. Parikh has established robust programs for the community of professionals - The Fortis School Mental Health program conducts workshops for schools and works in the area of preventive mental health through its flagship initiative Fortis Prosocial Moderator Program and provides a training platform for school counselors through the Fortis School Counsellor Forum, and the Fortis Organizational Psychology Initiative that works actively in promoting mental health in the corporate sector. Dr. Parikh strongly advocates the cause of mental health and the de-stigmatization of mental illness, through his writings and commentaries across different media. He can be reached at samir.parikh@fortishealthcare.com



Featured Institution

Maharashtra Dyslexia Association (MDA)

Address: 423, Ground Floor, Amit Park, 101, L J G Marg, Deonar, Mumbai - 400088. **Website:** www.mdamumbai.com

Maharashtra Dyslexia Association is a not-for-profit organization committed to securing the rights of students with dyslexia for an appropriate education. MDA was started in March 1996 by a group of parents and professionals to create awareness about dyslexia amongst the educational community in the city and the general public, and advocating the rights of students with Learning Disability. MDA aims to provide a better understanding of this common, but often misunderstood condition. The organization provides a comprehensive range of services and training courses, diagnostic and remedial facilities, awareness workshops, counseling, aptitude tests and professional trainings, with the aim of ensuring that affected students receive all the support they need to reach their full potential. Diagnostic services are available in Mumbai, Surat and Goa.

We are now available for conversations beyond the telephone and email!

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Connecting with us will help you know :

- What's new from Pearson globally
- New product launches for India and the subcontinent
- Upcoming Pearson Academy India workshops
- News from around the world on mental-health related issues
- Trends in mental-health care important for your professional practice

Solution Pad



Beck Youth Inventories, Second Edition, India (BYI-2 India)

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Age Range: 7 years to 18 years

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- Monitor progress and response to interventions
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About Us

Pearson Clinical and Talent Assessment (PCTA) is a part of Pearson, the world's leading learning company, with 150 years of experience in publishing. PCTA has been at the forefront of test publishing for over 100 years. It is responsible for the publication of many tests which have now become the international standards in their fields. We are proud to carry forward the legacy of the Psychological Corporation established in 1921, with our Psychcorp brand of assessments.

Our mission is to promote mental-health and well-being through professional use of assessment and intervention solutions that help transform personal, educational and professional lives of individuals.

Learn more about PCTA at www.pearsonclinical.in

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We'd like to hear from you



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