

in good company

WIPRO



**FAMILY STRENGTH:** Ms. Meera Rave, wife of Wipro employee Avinash Prasad in a one-on-one discussion with counsellor Meera Rave of 'Prerana'. An ANAND AGAR photograph.

## Time for the kids: Wipro counsels on effective parenting

By KRISHNA JOSE

IT industry leaders' State-of-the-art parenting programme at the Wipro Bengaluru division of Bangalore is a step higher. This time around, the corporate developmental department of Wipro has decided to add value to the hours of their programmes via the work place. As a part of the employee development programme, the department has been conducting 'parenting' workshops for the married employees of the human resource division. Employee development officer at Wipro's Chennai location says that a lot of thought has gone into this step. "Over the years, as the IT sector has grown, employees in this sector have been spending more and more time at the work place than at home. Especially in India, an IT professional has had to prove it has more than just competence in their capabilities and has been exposed to the western work ethics which is very 'ready based' and demands quicker responses from the worker," he adds.

"An Indian worker, as we have realised, is not going to make decisions on his own as quickly as a European worker or the same age and work experience. This is because our culture does not encourage independent thinking. We encourage our children to depend on their parents completely, as well as intellectually. According to Mr Joseph, it is in this context that Wipro introduced a workshop on parenting. These programmes are organised to help their children out of stressors. "We feel that by bringing a parental responsibility at home to theforeground, we'll be able to address the issue of stressors both to the self and to the organisation," he says.

The first batch of 25 Wipro employees with their spouses took part in a half-day workshop in February. Ms. Meera Rave, who has been a family

counsellor for five years and has a professional certificate in guidance and counselling, conducted the workshop. "The first session included a self-inspection exercise as well as classes on effective parenting. All were active in reading material, which included solving the practical issues that cropped up, faced in their family lives," says Ms Rave.

Mr Joseph says more such workshops are also to be held in the coming months, for the rest of the employees. "The divisional director has a budget of 2000. The balance of 30 couples will make the session in April. This year around, it will be a full day workshop." Wipro ought to be making money in their millions of other projects" adds, says Mr Joseph. "We will redesign our training after each batch and perhaps hold it in other regions of offices also."

The employees were impressed throughout the four sessions that such camps should be held more often. "It was a great experience for us through a session that dealt with what goes on in the minds of our children," says regional manager, L. Shashikumar, who was part of the first batch of parents. The 2000 revenue officer and family especially in the case of an IT professional, is becoming a real challenge to manage time at home where you are required to work round the clock most of the time," Mr Shashikumar adds. "We fight among ourselves as to whether we are giving quality time at home. The workshop was a real eye opener."

According to Mr Joseph, employee development programmes needn't be restricted to formal training. The department has been conducting "topical" self-education programmes, programmes on life problems at work and similar programmes for the employees. "As the end of the day, we want the purpose of employee development to be met," he says.